STAR TREK: NEMESIS

Screenplay by

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Story By

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INT. MEDICAL MONTAGE DAY

Life...

Glorious in its many forms. The biological pulse finding its way heroically through the cold manipulation of science.

CREDITS as we see a beautiful montage of futuristic medical technology. Through a microscope we see cells multiplying and gene strands exponentially increasing with the vibrancy of exploding flowers. We see laser splicing and biological manipulation on the molecular level.

CREDITS continue as we fade to...

INT. ROMULAN SENATE NIGHT

Politics...

In a cavernous, shadowy chamber. Dark figures lean together and talk seriously. Their hushed, urgent tones denote the gravity of their discussion.

We can't make out the words but there is no doubt what they are talking about...

The three year old HUMAN BOY who stands before them. The boy is alone and frightened, lost in the sweeping grandeur of the massive chamber.

CREDITS continue as we fade to...

EXT. REMAN HOMEWORLD NIGHT

Labor...

On a stark, desert planet with monolithic mountains and harsh crags shooting upward. The only light in this dark netherworld comes from the flames that accompany the hellish mining operations everywhere around us.

The human boy gazes over this desolate vista and then he looks up for a moment ... at the stars.

Then a tall figure leads him firmly into one of the mines. The boy seems to disappear into this flaming crucible.

CREDITS end as we go to...

EXT. EARTH, ALASKA -- PAVILION DAY

JEAN LUC PICARD.

His face is resolute and set. Even stern. His white dress uniform is buttoned tightly to the neck.

He looks at us evenly and then utters the word that has been the watchcry for his entire life as a Starfleet officer.

PICARD
Duty...

He lets the word resonate and then continues.

PICARD
A starship captain's life is filled with solemn duty. I have commanded men in battle. I have negotiated peace treaties between implacable enemies. I have represented the Federation in first contact with twenty-seven alien species ... But none of this compares to my solemn duty as...

Best man.

Laughter. We pull back to reveal the wedding reception of WILL RIKER and DEANNA TROI.

The Enterprise CREW is gathered with invited GUESTS. Riker and Deanna sit at the center of a long table.

Picard continues:

PICARD
First I was forced to host the bachelor party which, I might add, included three Andorians, two Telerites and a Gorn. It also included an embarrassing quantity of Romulan ale and, subsequently, Commander Worf's rousing rendition of the love aria from that old Klingon favorite "Kahless and Morath on the Bloody Plains of Honor"...

WORF groans.

PICARD
Then there was holding the groom's hand this morning as he repeatedly tried to button his dress uniform while waxing nostalgically about "those good ol' bachelor days on Risa" ... and now the damnable toast! Frankly, I want to get through it so I can return to my far easier duties on board the Enterprise...

Laughter. Picard looks at Riker and Deanna deeply. Raises his glass.

PICARD
Will Riker, you have been my trusted right arm for fourteen years, you have helped keep my course true and steady ... Deanna Troi, you have been my conscience and best guide, the touchstone to the better parts of myself ...

A beat. Emotion passing over Picard's features. He continues...

PICARD
You are my family ... And in proper maritime tradition I wish you full sails and a clear horizon ... My friends, make it so.

They drink.

EXT. EARTH, ALASKA -- PAVILION LATER

The party guests mingle as a band plays.

We are at a beautiful open-air pavilion high in the Denali mountains. The soaring ranges of Riker's native Alaska can be seen everywhere around us.

DR. BEVERLY CRUSHER goes to Picard:

BEVERLY
(playfully)
Sort of like losing a son and gaining an empath, isn't it?

PICARD
Please, Beverly, I'm emotional enough.

BEVERLY
Think you can hold it together long enough to congratulate the happy couple?

PICARD
If I start blubbering promise to beam me out. Level one medical emergency.

They head off toward Riker and Deanna.

Meanwhile, GEORDI LA FORGE sits with his girlfriend, the lovely DR. LEAH BRAHMS, who we met in Next Generation episodes "Galaxy's Child" and "Booby Trap."

GEORDI
All this give you any ideas?

LEAH
I don't think your Captain could survive another toast.

GEORDI
Maybe we should find out.

LEAH
I think the mountain air has gotten to you.

GEORDI
It's not the air...

He kisses her as Worf comes to them. Poor Worf is still suffering a bit from the bachelor party. He plops down beside them.

WORF
Romulan ale should be illegal.

GEORDI
It is.

WORF
Then it should be more illegal.

He groans and rests his head on the table.

Meanwhile, Riker and Deanna are talking to Picard and Beverly:

DEANNA
... really, Captain, it was a lovely toast.

PICARD
The least I could do for you, Deanna.

RIKER
(smiles)
Did I see a tear there?

PICARD
(smiles)
Must be the altitude.

DEANNA
Of course it is. .

PICARD
Now you promised me there are no speeches during the ceremony on Betazed.

DEANNA
No, no speeches ... Of course, no clothes either.

Picard looks at her. Riker laughs.

Then the band stops playing. All turn.

DATA stands with the band.

DATA
Ladies and Gentlemen and invited transgendered species ... In my study of Terran and Betazoid conjugal rites I have discovered it is traditional to present the "happy couple" with a gift. Given Commander Riker's affection for archaic musical forms I have elected to present the following as my gift in honor of their conjugation...

Riker shoots an amused glance to Deanna. Conjugation?

Data turns to the band leader...

DATA
If you please, Mister Band Leader, a-one and a-two and...

The band launches into a jaunty, swing version of the Irving Berlin standard "Blue Skies."

DATA
(sings)
"Blue skies, smiling at me,
Nothing but blue skies do I see.
Blue birds, singing a song,
Nothing but blue birds all day long.
Never saw the sun shining so bright,
Never saw things going so right..."

The crowd is appreciative. Loves the song. Except Worf, he momentarily raises his head from the table.

WORF
(groans)
Ugghhh ... Irving Berlin.

His heads thumps down again.

Meanwhile, Riker is anxious as a kid to join the band:

DEANNA
(smiles)
All right, go ahead.

Riker eagerly joins the band. Grabs the trombone and starts jamming with the orchestra. The song really swings.

PICARD
(to Deanna)
May I have this dance?

DEANNA
With pleasure, Captain.

Picard turns to Beverly as he leads Deanna to the dance floor:

PICARD
See all the fun you're going to miss at Starfleet Medical?

Geordi leads Leah to the dance floor as well. Beverly goes to Worf.

BEVERLY
Commander Worf ... Do Klingons swing?

WORF
I am unwell.

BEVERLY
Don't worry, I'm a doctor.

She pulls him to the dance floor as:

BEVERLY
I'm so glad you're back on the Enterprise.

WORF
I was not suited for the life of a ... diplomat.

BEVERLY
(wry)
Who'd have guessed?

They dance. Picard and Deanna sweep past them.

And we pull up and away as Data continues to sing and the crew dances. It is a joyous celebration of these people.

This family.

Fade to...

INT. REMAN HOMEWORLD -- STRUCTURE NIGHT

Darkness clings to this place like an incurable disease. This place, and these people, never see the sun.

Two figures are in a formal structure of some kind. It could be a house or a temple, we're not sure. But like a traditional Japanese home it is designed with utter simplicity. Spare and elegant.

One of the figures kneels by a tiny flame. Although we will meet him fully later, he is SHINZON.

The other figure stands. He is very tall and lean. We can make out the hint of eerie alien contours in his silhouette. He is Shinzon's Reman VICEROY.

We see neither figure clearly in this scene.

SHINZON
It's almost time...

VICEROY
As our ancestors promised.

SHINZON
As I promised ... (a beat) ... Come, let's study the prey.

He blows out the tiny flame and they step outside the structure...

EXT. REMAN HOMEWORLD -- OUTSIDE FOLLOWING

They move to a stone portico and gaze up at the night sky. The cruel promontories of this ruthless desert world soar up in the darkness around them.

A planet glimmers in the night sky not too far away.

They are still shrouded in darkness as they stare up at the planet.

SHINZON
They don't know how vulnerable it makes them. Living in the light ... Without our shadows, they've grown weak.

A beat.

SHINZON
(a whisper)
Romulus ... You cry out for me. And I have heard you.

Shinzon turns to his Viceroy and we suddenly see his face illuminated in a shaft of light.

And we realize that Shinzon is completely human.

SHINZON
And now ... they shall hear me.

EXT. ENTERPRISE SPACE

The Enterprise streaks through space.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- TEN FORWARD NIGHT

Data sits, impassive, in the empty Ten Forward.

As always, the android's placid, neutral expression still somehow manages to convey his wonder, curiosity and idiosyncratic zest for life.

Picard arrives with a very old bottle of Irish whiskey.

PICARD
I've been saving this. 23rd Century Irish whiskey ... Batten down the hatches...

He carefully breaks the seal on the treasured bottle. Opens it. Inhales the aroma. Smiles.

He offers the bottle to Data to smell. Data inhales. Silently thinks, computes, analyzes the chemical elements, does a cross-reference check of all other intoxicating liquors in the known galaxy. Then smiles, nods.

Picard is pleased with Data's reaction. He carefully pours two tiny glasses of the whiskey. Raises his glass, a toast.

PICARD
To happy endings.

DATA
To happy endings.

Picard carefully takes a tiny sip, savors the flavor, finally swallows. Enjoys it. Ahhh.

Data mimics Picard. Taking a tiny sip, savoring the flavor and finally swallowing. Ahhh.

DATA
Sir ... I noticed an interesting confluence of emotion at the wedding. I am familiar with the human concept of tears through laughter and its inverse, laughter through tears, but I could not help wondering about the human capacity for expressing both pleasure and sadness simultaneously.

PICARD
I understand why it would seem confusing ... Certain human rituals -- like weddings, birthdays or funerals -- evoke strong and very complex emotions. These rites carry great weight with us because they denote the passage of time.

DATA
And you were particularly aware of this feeling because Commander Riker is leaving to assume command of the Titan?

PICARD
Will and Deanna joining the Titan ... Dr. Crusher going to Starfleet Medical...

DATA
And this makes you "sad"?

PICARD
Well ... I suppose it does a bit. The older I get the more difficult it seems for me to change ... (he takes another sip of his whiskey, smiles) ... It's hard for an old fart like me to face anything changing, much less training new officers and ... saying goodbye to the old ones.

He pours another tiny bit of his precious whiskey. Smiles.

PICARD
You should know that Irish whiskey is notorious for bringing out the melancholy poet.

DATA
I do not think you are being an "old fart" sir. The resistance to change is a common human response. But in my observation the only constant in life is change. I believe existence is simply the process of adjusting to those changes.

PICARD
Sometimes I wish I had your dispassion ... You're right, of course. But knowing that won't make saying goodbye much easier.

A beat. Data thinks about it.

DATA
I will not leave the Enterprise. This is the only home I have ever known.

PICARD
You never know what's over the horizon, Data.

Picard pours two more tiny glasses of whiskey.

PICARD
Now, you make a toast.

DATA
To clear horizons.

PICARD
Clear horizons.

They drink.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE DAY

The bridge crew are at their stations. Picard is not on the bridge.

WORF
(grumbles)
I won't do it.

DEANNA
It's tradition, Worf. You of all people should appreciate that!

WORF
A warrior does not appear without his clothing. It leaves him ... vulnerable.

RIKER
I don't think we're going to see much combat on Betazed.

DEANNA
Don't be too sure ... Mother will be there.

Worf groans.

DATA
The Betazoid nuptial tradition is actually mirrored in a number of other species. The Mah'Den of Sirus II, for example, combine an unclothed wedding with a ceremonial dance where the guests mimic the mating rituals of the Sirusian mud worm.

RIKER
(to Worf)
There! Count your blessings.

Picard emerges from his Ready Room as:

WORF
I won't do it.

PICARD
Won't do what, Mister Worf?

WORF
Captain ... I think it is inappropriate for a Starfleet officer to appear ... (hates the word) ... naked.

PICARD
Come now, a big, strapping fellow like you? What are you afraid of?

Deanna laughs.

Then a readout on Worf's console attracts his attention:

WORF
I'm picking up an unusual electromagnetic signature from the Kolarin system.

PICARD
What sort of signature?

Worf looks up. Glances at Data.

WORF
Positronic.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE LATER

Geordi is at the Engineering station with Picard, Riker and Data.

GEORDI
It's very faint but I've isolated it to the third planet in the Kolarin system.

PICARD
What do we know about the planet?

GEORDI
Uncharted. We'll have to get closer for a more detailed scan.

PICARD
(to Data)
Theories?

DATA
Since positronic signatures have only been known to emanate from androids such as myself, it is logical to theorize that there is an android such as myself on Kolarus III.

GEORDI
How many of you did Dr. Soong make?

DATA
I thought only myself and Lore.

RIKER
(looking at star chart)
Diverting to the Kolarin system takes us awfully close to the Romulan Neutral Zone.

PICARD
(looking at star chart)
Still well on our side...

Picard glances at Data, recognizes the android's deep desire to explore this possible connection to others like himself.

PICARD
I think it's worth a look ... Don't worry, Number One, we'll get you to Betazed with time to spare.

RIKER
Thank you, sir.

PICARD
(to all, especially Worf)
Where we will <u>all</u> honor the Betazoid traditions ... Now, if you'll excuse me, I'll be in the gym.

He goes.

RIKER
(to Helm Officer)
Mister Branson, set course for the Kolarin system. Warp Five -- (Deanna shoots him a glance) -- Warp Seven.

HELM OFFICER (MISTER BRANSON)
Plotted and laid in, sir.

RIKER
Engage.

Meanwhile, Geordi and Data remain at the Engineering Station, studying the displays.

GEORDI
What do you think, Data, a long-lost relative?

Data doesn't respond, but the curiosity on his face is apparent.

EXT. ENTERPRISE -- OVER KOLARUS III SPACE

The Enterprise is in orbit around the uncharted planet. In the distance we can see the distorting violence of an ion storm.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE DAY

Kolarus III is on the viewscreen, the ion storm raging beyond it.

GEORDI
I read six distinct positronic signatures, spread out over a few kilometers on the surface.

PICARD
What do we know about the population?

DATA
Isolated pockets of humanoids. It appears to be a pre-warp civilization at an early stage of industrial development.

GEORDI
Captain, I don't recommend transporting, that ion storm doesn't look very neighborly. It could head this way without much warning.

PICARD
Understood. Data, Worf, you're with me.

Picard, Data and Worf start heading toward the turbolift--

RIKER
(stands, protesting)
Captain, I hope I don't have to remind you--

PICARD
I appreciate your concern, Number One, but I've been itching to try out the Argo.

RIKER
Sir--

PICARD
Captain's prerogative, Will. There's no foreseeable danger ... and your wife would never forgive me if anything happened to you...

He steps into the turbolift with the others.

PICARD
You have the bridge, Mister Troi.

The turbolift doors slide shut.

The bridge crew heartily enjoys Riker's momentary demotion to house husband.

EXT. ENTERPRISE -- OVER KOLARUS III DAY

The shuttlebay doors of the Enterprise slide open and the transport vehicle Argo emerges.

The Argo is larger than a regular shuttle with a particularly large cargo area at the back.

EXT. KOLARUS III DAY

The Argo lands on the planet. It is primarily a desert environment with some canyons and mountains. Like Death Valley, blazing heat waves shimmer in the distance. The shuttle sits silently for a moment.

We wonder at the delay, then...

The rear cargo doors slide open and Picard, Data and Worf roar out on a 24th Century equivalent of a military jeep!

Picard drives, Data beside him. Worf stands in the back at a mounted phaser canon. It is a muscular, exciting vehicle; a Starfleet version of the jeep from old television series "The Rat Patrol."

Picard screeches to a stop. Data and Worf lurch. A cloud of dust momentarily obscures them. Data quickly monitors the positronic signatures with a tricorder:

DATA
The closest signature is two kilometers to the west ... that direction, sir.

PICARD
Thank you, Data ... (he smiles) ... Let's see what she can do.

He roars off in a cloud of dust!

Picard clearly enjoys driving. He roars over the desert terrain at breakneck speed, having a hell of a good time. His comrades don't exactly appreciate his free-spirited driving panache.

Worf clings on to the mounted phaser canon for dear life. Data steadies himself by grasping to a rollbar.

DATA
I will always be baffled by the human predilection for piloting vehicles at unsafe velocities.

Picard smiles and drives a little faster.

DATA
(monitoring with tricorder)
Over that rise, sir ... half a kilometer.

They continue on.

And before long they can see something on the level desert floor before them. They approach and stop to discover...

An android arm. The fingers patiently drumming the ground.

DATA
It appears to be ... (he scans with his tricorder) ... an arm.

WORF
(suspicious)
Why is it moving?

DATA
(still scanning)
Like me, it has been designed with modular power sources.

PICARD
Mister Worf, if you please.

Worf climbs from the jeep and carefully approaches the arm. Gingerly picks it up. The arm responds to being picked up, the hand starts feeling around in the air like something from a horror movie. Worf shudders.

He returns to the jeep. Quickly sets the arm down in the rear cargo area.

DATA
The next signature is one kilometer to the south.

Picard starts the jeep in motion.

Time passes as they continue on ... coming across another arm ... a leg ... a torso ... another leg ... various disassembled components of a Data-like android!

INT./EXT. JEEP -- KOLARUS III -- CANYON DAY

Worf stands uneasily amidst the moving body parts. There is only one component missing: the head.

Picard steers the jeep into a canyon. Stops. Data scans with his tricorder, pointing it up into the gently sloping hills that form the sides of the canyon.

DATA
(scanning with tricorder)
The final signature is approximately 300 meters up that incline.

PICARD
Mister Worf, accompany Data please.

WORF
(uneasy)
To find the ... head, sir?

PICARD
(amused)
If you don't mind.

Worf and Data climb up into the hills in pursuit of the final piece as Picard opens the jeep's hood and checks the engine.

EXT. KOLARUS III -- HILLS DAY

Worf and Data climb as Data scans and indicates the direction:

DATA
... ten meters...

Worf pulls his phaser, ready.

DATA
I think it unlikely you will need your phaser to recover the cranial unit ... Of course, it could bite you.

Then they see it.

Data's head. Or the spitting image anyway. Laying inert in the dust before them.

They approach. Stop.

WORF
It's ... you.

DATA
The resemblance is ... striking.

Then the head's eyes suddenly pop open. It looks up at them with a sort of blank, childlike wonder.

HEAD
Why am I looking at me?

DATA
You are not looking at yourself. You are looking at me.

HEAD
(looking at Worf)
You do not look like me.

WORF
No.

DATA
(to head)
I would like to pick you up now. May I do that?

HEAD
(to Worf)
You have a pretty shirt.

WORF
Thank you.

Data gently picks up the head. Looks at it. The two identical faces gaze at each other.

DATA
Fascinating...

Then -- BLAM! -- a boulder near them explodes--

Worf and Data spin to see--

A nomadic tribe of desert ALIENS swarming toward them firing primitive plasma weapons--

Data and Worf race back down the canyon, toward the jeep -- some open-field running and a bit of phaser action -- Worf firing to distract and slow the aliens, not kill them -- through all of this the head is chattering away blandly:

HEAD
I have two arms and ten fingers. Do you know where my arms are? I cannot see where we are going. Where are we going?... (etc.)

The action continues. Then Data finds himself almost surrounded--

DATA
Commander!

Worf turns -- Data throws the head to Worf like a football, a perfect spiral -- the head is still chattering away -- Worf catches it--

WORF
STOP TALKING!

The head abruptly stops talking.

Data, hands free now, quickly incapacitates the aliens around him with a dazzling demonstration of his superior strength and agility.

Meanwhile, Worf tucks the head under his arm and sprints like a master running back -- evading aliens and occasionally firing his phaser--

They are closer to the jeep now -- but they are in trouble -- the swarm of aliens almost overtaking them--!

When a thundering BLAST sends up a shower of debris, stopping the aliens -- Picard is standing in the rear of the jeep, firing the phaser canon.

Data and Worf climb into the jeep as Picard leaps into the front seat and roars off--

INT./EXT. JEEP -- KOLARUS III FOLLOWING

Worf, standing at the phaser canon, quickly hands the head to Data in the front seat:

WORF
If you wouldn't mind.

DATA
Thank you.

The head looks up at Picard.

HEAD
You have a shiny head.

Picard glances at the head.

DATA
He is very observant.

PICARD
I can see that.

WORF
Captain!

Picard turns to see that they are being pursued! The aliens are racing after them in crude desert-terrain vehicles--

PICARD
(to Data)
Shall we try some "unsafe velocities?"

He floors it -- racing across the desert landscape--

Worf fires the mounted phaser canon -- blasting away at the aliens, not killing them, just stopping them -- a few dramatic crashes as the alien vehicles overturn--

Meanwhile:

HEAD
(to Picard)
You have a red shirt.

DATA
(to head)
This is not an appropriate time for a conversation.

HEAD
Why?

DATA
Because the captain has to concentrate on piloting the vehicle.

HEAD
Why?

PICARD
Data!

DATA
Sorry, sir.

They continue to race over the landscape -- bouncing and flying over natural rises in the terrain -- trying to evading their pursuers...

INT./EXT. JEEP -- KOLARUS III -- ARGO DAY

They are nearing the Argo, speeding toward the rear cargo area.

WORF
Captain -- we seem to have lost an arm.

PICARD
How did we lose an arm?!

WORF
It must have bounced out, sir.

Picard fishtails to a stop by the Argo.

PICARD
Prepare to lift off. I'll go back.

Worf and Data quickly carry the android components to the Argo and then Picard roars back for the arm...

INT./EXT. JEEP -- KOLARUS III DAY

Picard puts the pedal to the metal and races through the alien vehicles -- weaving in and out, avoiding their fire -- an exhilarating adventure -- then he sees it--

The arm -- Picard slows down only long enough to reach out of the jeep and snatch up the wayward appendage--

INT. ARGO -- COCKPIT DAY

Data and Worf are prepared to lift off -- they see some of the aliens running toward them--

These aliens are armed only with exotic spears and swords. Because the rear cargo bays doors are open to receive the jeep, the ship is vulnerable.

Data glances to Worf -- and slowly lifts off -- hovering out of reach of the aliens.

INT./EXT. JEEP -- KOLARUS III DAY

In the jeep, Picard speeds back to the Argo -- the aliens are closing on him now -- their fire becoming heavier -- but then he sees the Argo -- hovering over the surface, rear cargo doors open--

Picard floors it -- using a natural rise in the terrain as a ramp -- the jeep flies through the air -- and into the cargo bay--

INT. ARGO -- CARGO BAY FOLLOWING

--Picard slams on the brakes -- the jeep screeches to a stop as the doors shut and the Argo shoots into the air.

Picard climbs from the jeep. He carefully rubs a bit of dirt from the hood.

EXT. ROMULUS SUNSET

The sun is setting on the capital city of the great Romulan Star Empire. The imperial monoliths and martial towers of this bustling city glow red as the sun dips below the horizon.

We slowly move down toward the most imposing building of the city. The Romulan Senate chamber...

INT. ROMULUS -- SENATE SUNSET

The Romulan Senate meets in emergency session. Urgent voices in debate.

A respected female Senator, TAL'AURA, speaks up firmly:

TAL'AURA
In four thousand years it has never been allowed! The Senate is for Romulans. You bring dishonor to this chamber if you allow him to speak!

SENATOR 1
While I respect Senator Tal'Aura's position, I think we would be wise to acknowledge the reality of the situation... (other Senators agree) ... Every day he gains more support among our younger citizens. They like what he's saying!

SENATOR 2
And his valor in the Dominion War has given him a position of some authority--

TAL'AURA
(firm)
Authority we gave him and we can take away.

SENATOR 1
He has a thousand troops in the city, Senator. How do you suggest we--?

All debate is suddenly silenced as--

The massive, bronze doors swing open and Shinzon strides into the august chamber.

Following him are his Reman Viceroy and a platoon of his terrifying REMAN WARRIORS.

This is the first time we have fully seen a Reman. They are powerful, monstrous creatures; tall, ashen-skinned ectomorphs that bear a disturbing resemblance to the original Nosferatu. They are Shinzon's sinister children of the night. Even more sinister now in the blood-red glow of sunset.

And we see Shinzon fully as well. He is a dynamic young man in his twenties. Very handsome with pale, almost white skin and shining, golden hair. He wears a striking Reman military uniform.

He strides down the aisle and stops on the huge star map that makes up the entire floor of the chamber.

The senators look at him and his warriors, dumbfounded.

SHINZON
Senators ... I trust you will forgive the interruption but we have been outside this chamber for too long ... Please, take a good look ... How many of you have ever actually seen one of us?

TAL'AURA
(coldly)
Commander Shinzon -- Remans are not permitted in this chamber.

A beat as Shinzon looks at her. Then he points to the familiar Romulan crest that dominates one wall: a ferocious bird of prey holding two planets, one in either claw.

SHINZON
Every day for thousands of years the Romulan Senate has sat here under that noble crest and dictated the fate of its sister-planet. Look at it, Senator! Two planets. Their destinies conjoined. Yet for generations one of those planets was without a voice. We will be silent no longer.

TAL'AURA
There are protocols to deal with Reman affairs--

Shinzon paces across the star map, his zealous oratory building:

SHINZON
I know your protocols, Senator. They start with the whip and end with an unmourned grave on that black planet above us. Mine our dilithium, fight our wars, toil for our comfort, but stay in the shadows! ... Can you really believe this is what our ancestors intended?! We were meant to be one people! We were meant to be a great empire!

He stops on the star map, standing directly on the area that denotes the Neutral Zone between the Romulan Empire and the Federation.

SHINZON
Look at it, Senators. This gash of empty space. Do you see it as I do? Do you see the shame of the Neutral Zone? The moment we gave up our territory to appease the Federation we lost our way--

TAL'AURA
While we appreciate your history lesson, Commander, it can have little bearing on the--

SHINZON
Open your eyes, Romulans! This is our destiny! The destiny we will fulfill together ... (he carefully steps onto the Federation part of the star chart) ... We will take back what is ours. We will reconquer what our forefathers should never have given up.

TAL'AURA
You propose a war with the Federation?

SHINZON
I propose we fight them instead of fighting each other -- (he points to the Romulan crest) -- Under that banner. Two planets in a single empire where every Reman has the same rights you do, Senator.

TAL'AURA
You talk of rights, Shinzon. By what right does a mere human speak for the Reman people?

Shinzon spins to her, his eyes burning with sudden and disturbing fury.

He controls his anger. Then speaks quietly:

SHINZON
How sad that I have to ... How sad that in the thousands of years of oppression we have suffered, not a single Romulan has ever said "No ... this is not right. He is my brother, not my slave."

Shinzon's quiet words haunt the chamber for a moment.

Then...

SHINZON
The day has come for unification. For Romulans and Remans to join together in this great mission.

TAL'AURA
Commander ... You must know that Romulus is still re-arming from the Dominion War. An extended military campaign is out of the question.

SHINZON
Remus has already re-armed.

A tremor of shock cascades around the chamber.

SHINZON
In the darkness of our homeworld ... we have been busy. Harnessing a force so powerful that even the thought of it would make your brightest dawn as dark as our perpetual night.

He looks at the great Romulan crest again.

SHINZON
(deeply)
Look at it, Senators ... Weep for what has been. And rejoice for what's to come.

He turns and strides out of the chamber, his fearsome Reman warriors following.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- ENGINEERING LAB DAY

Beverly gazes at the android head. It gazes back at her.

BEVERLY
I think you have nicer eyes.

We pull back to reveal she is speaking to Data. Data stands with Picard, Riker and Geordi.

DATA
Our eyes are identical, Doctor.

The android is in a framework rig that holds the various body parts in place. The parts are not yet assembled

PICARD
Geordi?

GEORDI
(at work analyzing the torso section)
Well, he seems to have the same internal mechanics as Data but not as much positronic development. The neural pathways aren't nearly as sophisticated ... I'd say he's ... a prototype. Something Dr. Soong created before Data and Lore.

DATA
(to head)
Do you have a name, sir?

HEAD
I am the B-9.

PICARD
Be-nign. Dr. Soong's penchant for whimsical names seems to have no end.

RIKER
Captain, given our problems with Lore in the past I recommend we operate under at least minimal security safeguards ... (to Data) ... No offense.

DATA
I am incapable of taking offense, sir.

HEAD
(to Riker)
You have a fuzzy face.

PICARD
(trying to ignore the head)
I agree, Number One. Put him back together and ... keep me informed.

He goes.

Geordi and Data begin to reassemble the B-9 piece by piece like the Tin Man as:

DATA
Can you tell me how you came to be on the planet where we found you?

B-9
(blandly)
I was taken from my homeworld by people called the "Pakleds." They are fat. They traded me to a ship belonging to the "Bolians." The "Bolians" are blue. They put me in a seat and asked me questions. Then they were attacked by another ship...

Time passes...

And still the B-9 is yammering blandly away. He is more fully assembled now. By this time Beverly is thoroughly bored.

B-9
... when I was picked up by people called the "Nausicaans". They have long teeth. They asked if I could do anything to help them. I told them I could do whatever they wanted. They asked me to clean out the "engine manifolds." I told them I did not know what an "engine manifold" looks like--

BEVERLY
Um ... excuse me. I have some diagnostics to run on the, um, medical scanner things.

She quickly escapes.

B-9
They showed me the "engine manifolds." Then they showed me what a "plasma mop" was...

Time passes...

And still the B-9 is yammering away. He is almost completely assembled by now. Riker is bored out of his mind.

B-9
... then the "Cardassians" put me into something called a "garbage chute" and I went out into space again--

WORF (V.O. on comm)
Worf to Commander Riker. I have the tactical manifests ready, sir.

RIKER
(quickly tapping his comm badge)
Worf! Wonderful! I'll be right there! ... (he stands)
... Duty calls, gentlemen. Carry on.

He escapes.

B-9
Fuzzy face is gone.

DATA
Yes, please continue.

B-9
I was in space for a long time. Then I was picked up by a ship belonging to the "Talosians." They asked me where I came from. I told them I was taken from my homeworld by people called the "Pakleds". They are fat...

Geordi groans.

Time passes...

And still the B-9 is yammering away. By this time Geordi is slumped in a chair and only Data is listening. The B-9 is fully assembled.

B-9
... then I opened my eyes and saw you.

A beat. The B-9 is finally done with his tale.

DATA
Do you know who I am?

B-9
You are me.

DATA
No. My name is Data ... I am your brother.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- TEN FORWARD NIGHT

A crew member sits in a corner of Ten Forward, playing the lovely aria "Dove sono" from Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro" on a Vulcan lute.

Riker and Deanna are having dinner with Worf.

DEANNA
(to Worf)
... and after the ceremony on Betazed, three entire weeks for our honeymoon.

RIKER
We're going sailing on the Opal Sea. We've booked an old-fashioned solar catamaran. Just us and the sun and the waves.

WORF
It seems a very ... soft honeymoon.

DEANNA
(amused)
It's meant to be relaxing.

WORF
A Klingon honeymoon begins with the Kholamar desert march where the couple bonds in endurance trials. If they survive the challenge they move on to the Fire Caves of Fek'lhr to face the demons of Gre'thor.

RIKER
Well, that sounds relaxing too.

WORF
It is ... invigorating.

They see Data enter Ten Forward, carefully leading the B-9. A security officer follows and remains by the door.

RIKER
So they've got him up and running.

WORF
He's a very ... unusual android.

RIKER
(smiles)
Runs in the family.

They watch as Data leads the B-9 to a table. Data instructs him to sit. The B-9 sits and stares forward placidly. Data shows him how use a napkin.

Deanna watches Data and the B-9 very closely as:

WORF
What are we going to do with him?

RIKER
I think Starfleet Academy is out of the question.

WORF
Perhaps we can train him for light duties on board.

RIKER
There'll be plenty of time for that ... For now, it's nice to see Data getting to know his brother.

Deanna continues to watch from across the room as:

The B-9 is looking at the crew member playing the Vulcan lute.

DATA
Are you familiar with music?

B-9
No.

DATA
This piece was written by a human composer named Mozart. Do you find it ... stimulating?

B-9
No.

He stares forward blandly. Data continues on, trying to make a connection.

DATA
I have found the exploration of music deeply satisfying ... (the B-9 does not respond) ... Many cultures believe they can communicate their feelings most effectively through music ... (the B-9 does not respond) ... They feel that music can express the complex nature of their emotions.

The B-9 looks at him blankly.

DATA
I play an instrument called the violin. I have been studying for several years and...

He stops. The B-9 is staring blandly at a fork on the table.

A beat as Data looks at him. Then:

DATA
That is called a fork.

Across the room, a note of concern passes over Deanna's face as she watches Data showing the B-9 how to use a fork.

There is something strangely poignant in the twin androids. One a bundle of curiosity and intelligence; the other somewhat like a slow, simple child.

EXT. ROMULUS -- STREETS NIGHT

A Calcutta-like chaos of winding, dark alleys and small, tight streets make up this part of Romulus. Vendors hawk wares and the city's nighttime denizens are emerging.

Tal'Aura, the female Romulan Senator who spoke out against Shinzon earlier, is making her way from the Senate with another SENATOR.

TAL'AURA
... he knows we could have a hundred legions here in a day. He's not planning to overthrow the government, he's planning to ignore it.

SENATOR 3
What does the Praetor say?

TAL'AURA
I'm going to see him now. But I assure you the Praetor won't rest until every Reman is back in the dilithium mines.

SENATOR 3
I'm glad to hear it ... Goodnight, Senator.

TAL'AURA
Goodnight.

Senator 3 heads off in another direction.

Tal'Aura continues on, twisting through a number of tight alleys on her way to the Praetor.

Then she stops. Looks around. She senses she is not alone. At first she is simply curious. She continues on. Then stops again. Someone is following her. A note of tension creeps into her expression.

She slips into a Byzantine network of dark alleys, trying to escape. But something is hunting ... stalking ... moving through the twisting shadows after her. There but not there.

Remans. In the dark, in their element. We see their ominous shapes moving swiftly through the darkness. Tal'Aura tries to evade her unseen pursuers, weaving in and out of the dark alleys...

EXT. ROMULUS -- DESERTED ALLEY FOLLOWING

She is almost running now -- she slams to a stop as--

Two Reman Warriors appear from nowhere, dropping down directly before her. She pants for breath, looking at them.

She spins as Shinzon and his Viceroy step from the shadows behind her.

Shinzon slowly walks to her. He looks at her for a moment.

SHINZON
"Mere human"?

Then something happens so quickly we are not even sure we saw it:

The Viceroy pulls a savage Reman knife and coolly disembowels her with one efficient slash.

She sinks to the street -- dying -- her eyes wide in disbelief.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- READY ROOM NIGHT

Picard is at his replicator unit:

PICARD
Earl Grey, hot.

A cup of tea appears. He takes it as the door chime sounds.

PICARD
Come ... (Deanna enters) ... Counsellor.

DEANNA
Do you have a moment, sir?

PICARD
Of course, sit down.

He sits at his desk, she sits across from him.

DEANNA
It's about Data ... I've watched him with the B-9 and I'm troubled. Data's desire for a "family" is very strong. I'm afraid he may be investing too much in the B-9.

PICARD
You're speaking of emotional investment?

DEANNA
The B-9 is like a slow child, sir. And Data, in his own way, has assumed the position of a parent or guardian. I'm afraid he has expectations based on his own experiences. He'll be disappointed when the B-9 can't meet those expectations.

PICARD
As much as we care for him, Deanna ... we have to remember that Data isn't capable of disappointment.

DEANNA
I don't believe that, sir.

A quiet beat.

PICARD
I'm going to miss you.

DEANNA
And I you.

They are interrupted by a comm signal:

RIKER (V.O. on comm)
Captain, you have an Alpha Priority communication from Starfleet Command.

PICARD
Acknowledged ... (Deanna stands) ... I'll talk to Data.

DEANNA
Thank you, sir.

She goes. Picard activates his desk top viewscreen.

ADMIRAL KATHRYN JANEWAY appears on Picard's monitor. Janeway is the former captain of Voyager. Her new rank fits her well, she has lost none of her dry humor and down-to-earth charm.

PICARD
Admiral Janeway. Good to see you.

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
Jean Luc ... How'd you like a trip to Romulus?

PICARD
(smiles)
With or without the rest of the fleet?

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
A diplomatic mission. We've been invited, believe it or not. Seems there's some kind of internal political shakeup going on there. A Reman Commander named Shinzon has demanded a Federation envoy.

PICARD
Reman?

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
Believe me, we don't understand it either. But he's been making some unpleasant noises about the Neutral Zone. A fair amount of saber rattling. We have to take it seriously until we know what's going on.

PICARD
And the Praetor has allowed our visit?

JANEWAY (smiles, on viewscreen)
The Praetor is a study in Romulan diplomacy, using a lot of pretty words to say nothing ... You're the closest ship so I want you to go and hear Shinzon's "demands" and get the lay of the land. If the Empire becomes unstable, it could mean trouble for the entire quadrant.

PICARD
Understood.

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
We're sending you all the intelligence we have, but it's not much ... I don't need to tell you to watch your back, Jean Luc.

PICARD
Not with the Romulans.

JANEWAY (smiles wryly, on viewscreen)
The Son'a, the Borg, the Romulans ... You seem to get all the easy assignments.

PICARD
Just lucky, Admiral.

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
Let's hope that luck holds. Janeway out.

The transmission ends.

Picard sits for a moment, intrigued. Then he goes to the bridge...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Picard goes to his command chair:

PICARD
(to Helm)
Lay in a new course ... Take us to the Neutral Zone. Warp eight.

The crew is shocked.

HELM OFFICER
Aye aye, sir. Course plotted and laid in.

RIKER
The Neutral Zone?

PICARD
I'm afraid the Opal Sea will have to wait, Number One ... Engage.

EXT. ENTERPRISE SPACE

And the Enterprise jumps to high warp -- disappearing in a flash of dazzling light.

INT. ROMULUS -- IMPERIAL PALACE NIGHT

Flickering torches illuminate the cold, martial splendor of the Romulan Imperial palace.

Two Romulan SENATORS and Two Romulan GENERALS stand before PRAETOR YON'ZIA. Yon'zia is an extremely capable leader, well-versed in the treacherous ways of Romulan politics.

Currently Yon'zia stands at a large, open window. Gazing over his capital, his back to them.

GENERAL 1
...his audacity is outrageous! Summoning a Federation vessel to "hear his demands!" What gives him the right to make demands?!

YON'ZIA
(back still turned)
And it's to be Picard's ship ... That cannot be a coincidence.

SENATOR 1
With all respect, Praetor, I don't understand why you allowed it.

GENERAL 2
I have two thousand praetorian troops on high alert. One word from you and we could end this tonight.

YON'ZIA
(back still turned)
I'm not sure even your praetorians could accomplish the task, General. He has the entire Reman assault force at his disposal.

GENERAL 1
Then kill him. End his treachery now, in the Romulan way.

YON'ZIA
(back still turned)
And make a martyr of him?

Yon'zia finally turns to them.

YON'ZIA
No, gentlemen. I will not give the Remans a symbol to deify for generations to come ... And I will not plunge this empire into a civil war that could threaten our dilithium supply.

A beat.

YON'ZIA
He is a very young man, with a young man's emotions. They will eventually undo him. I am a very old man who has learned the value of patience ... I will wait and I will watch. At the proper time, I will strike. And he won't even see the blade as it slides between his ribs.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- ENGINEERING NIGHT

Geordi is at work in Engineering. Data enters with the B-9 following faithfully behind.

GEORDI
Data. Hello, B-9.

The B-9 looks at him.

DATA
(to B-9)
Say hello to Commander La Forge.

B-9
Hello, Commander La Forge.

DATA
You may sit down over there.

The B-9 sits at a nearby console.

DATA
And do not touch anything ... (to Geordi) ... I have been considering a course of action for the B-9. I would like you to download my memory engrams into his neural net.

GEORDI
Why would you want me to do that?

DATA
I believe the B-9 was designed with the same self-actualization parameters as myself. If my memory engrams were to be integrated into his positronic matrix, he would have all my abilities.

GEORDI
He'd have all your memories too. You feel comfortable with that?

DATA
I feel nothing, Geordi ... It is my belief that with my memory engrams he would be able to function as a more complete individual.

GEORDI
An individual more like you, you mean.

DATA
Yes.

GEORDI
Maybe he's not supposed to be like you. Maybe he's supposed to be just like he is.

DATA
At present he serves no useful function. Dr. Soong created us to become active and useful members of society. I do not believe he would have wanted the B-9 to live out his life in his present state.

Geordi thinks about it.

GEORDI
I don't know, Data ... I have no idea if it would even work...

Data looks at the B-9 for a moment. A vague hint of sadness passes over his features.

DATA
He is helpless, Geordi. I would like to help him.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- OBSERVATION LOUNGE NIGHT

Data conducts a briefing for the senior crew members.

Monitors currently show an image of two planets in orbit and their sun.

DATA
... as you can see the habitable half of Remus is always in darkness because, like Mercury, one side always faces the sun. Due to the extreme temperatures on that half of their world, the Remans live on the dark side of the planet.

Various grainy and unclear new images appear to illustrate Data's words:

DATA
Almost nothing is known about the Reman homeworld, although intelligence scans have proven the existence of dilithium mining and heavy weapons construction.

Very obscure images of Remans appear, the crew can barely make out the monstrous figures:

DATA
The Remans themselves are considered an undesirable caste in the hierarchy of the Empire.

RIKER
But they also have the reputation of being formidable warriors. In the Dominion War, Reman forces were used as assault troops in the most violent encounters.

PICARD
(grim)
Cannon-fodder.

RIKER
Yes.

PICARD
(to Data)
What have you learned about Commander Shinzon?

The images end. There are no images of Shinzon.

DATA
Starfleet intelligence was only able to provide a partial account of his military record. We can infer he is relatively young and a capable commander. He fought seventeen major engagements in the War. All successful. Beyond that, we know nothing.

PICARD
Well ... it seems we're truly sailing into the unknown. Keep at it, Data. Anything you can give me would be appreciated. Dismissed.

The meeting breaks up. Worf goes to Picard.

WORF
Sir ... I recommend we go to Red Alert.

PICARD
Not quite yet, Commander.

WORF
Permission to speak freely, sir ... (Picard nods) ... I know the Romulans and I don't trust them. They live only for conquest. They are a people <u>without</u> <u>honor</u> ... We are alone, well inside their territory. I recommend extreme caution.

PICARD
Noted, Mister Worf. But, for better or worse, we're here on a diplomatic mission. I have to proceed under Federation protocols. But at the first sign of trouble, you can be assured, those protocols will no longer apply.

WORF
Thank you, sir.

PICARD
Besides, truth be told, we're currently outgunned by about a thousand Romulan Warbirds to one.

WORF
(smiles)
I like those odds.

Picard smiles and goes.

<u>INT. ROMULUS -- BEDROOM NIGHT</u>

A very old man sits staring into a fire. He is an aged ROMULAN GENERAL. A face marked by countless battles and eyes that have seen too much.

He gazes into the flickering fireplace, ruminating on his sins.

A voice from the shadows surprises him:

SHINZON (V.O.)
Do you know what it was like...?

The Old General turns his head, shocked to see Shinzon standing in a corner.

SHINZON
As much as the guards hated the Remans, they hated me more ... I was beaten. I was bruised and bloodied every day of my life as I tore the dilithium from the rock. For years, General.

OLD GENERAL
You're not here...

Shinzon moves closer.

SHINZON
Yes, General. I'm here. I've come home.

OLD GENERAL
I have this dream every night...

SHINZON
You didn't create me to haunt your dreams. You created me for a great mission. Why did you abandon me?

OLD GENERAL
The Senate ... the politicians ... grew fearful. Afraid of the Federation. They wanted to kill you. Because of who you were ... because of what you could be ... I saved your life.

SHINZON
You sent me to the dark world. And I learned dark ways ... (he moves closer) ... Picard is coming to me.

OLD GENERAL
No...

Shinzon slowly pulls a Reman knife. Moves closer to the Old General.

SHINZON
The great mission has begun again ... And as you die I want you to dream once more. Dream of the years I spent on Remus. Dream of the torments I suffered...

He leans close as if to embrace the old man. Drives the knife into him. Whispers into his ear:

SHINZON
Dream of my pain.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- ENGINEERING LAB DAY

Geordi is removing the last of the computer connections from between Data's head and the B-9's head. He carefully closes the panel in Data's head as:

DATA
(to B-9)
Do you know where you are?

B-9
I am in a room with lights.

He looks blankly at the console lights.

DATA
Can you remember ... our father?

B-9
No.

Data glances to Geordi.

DATA
Do you know the name of the captain of this vessel?

B-9
No.

GEORDI
(to B-9)
Do you know my name?

B-9
You have a soft voice.

Geordi looks at Data.

GEORDI
(gently)
Data, he's assimilating a lot of programming, it could take a while for his matrix to adapt. Give him some time...

Data has been studying some circuitry in the B-9's neck.

DATA
What purpose does this serve?

GEORDI
(also examining circuitry)
It seems to be a redundant memory port ... Maybe it's for provisional memory storage in case his neural pathways overload?

DATA
Dr. Soong must have found it unnecessary in later versions.

GEORDI
It's possible the extra memory port is interfering with the engram processing. Mind if I keep him here and run some diagnostics?

DATA
No, I do not mind...

Data looks at the B-9 with a sort of sadness.

DATA
But I believe he will prove incapable of performing higher functions.

GEORDI
Don't give up hope, Data -- I know, I know, you're not capable of hope.

DATA
(looking at B-9)
I am not.

Data stands. The B-9 stands to follow.

DATA
No, remain with Commander La Forge. He is going to try to make you well.

The B-9 sits. Data goes. Geordi watches him go.

EXT. ENTERPRISE -- OVER ROMULUS SPACE

The Enterprise is in orbit around Romulus. Remus can be seen in the distance.

PICARD (V.O.)
Captain's Log. Stardate 47844.9. The Enterprise has arrived at Romulus and is waiting at the coordinates Shinzon designated. All our hails have gone unanswered. We've been waiting for seventeen hours...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The crew is tense.

Silence.

Worf, at tactical, slowly stretches his neck. Trying to release the tension. It cracks. Deanna jumps a bit.

Silence.

RIKER
Why doesn't he answer our hails?

PICARD
It's an old psychological strategy, Number One. To put him in a position of dominance and make us uneasy.

RIKER
It's working.

PICARD
(to Deanna)
Counsellor?

DEANNA
They're out there, sir.

Picard stands and walks to the viewscreen. He gazes at Romulus below and the black infinity of space beyond. They're out there. Waiting.

WORF
Sir, I recommend we raise shields and go to Red Alert.

PICARD
Not yet, Mister Worf.

RIKER
Captain, with all due respect to diplomatic protocols -- the Federation Council's not sitting out here, we are.

PICARD
Patience ... Diplomacy is a very exacting occupation. We can wait.

DATA
Captain...

And on the viewscreen...

Shinzon's magnificent Reman Warbird, the SCIMITAR, de-cloaks directly before the Enterprise...

EXT. OVER ROMULUS SPACE

Our first sight of this incredible ship is absolutely breathtaking.

Shinzon's vessel combines the clean lines of the traditional Romulan Warbird with unique weaponry and styling. It is huge, almost twice as large as the Enterprise. And it is aggressive. Awesome in its power.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The crew gapes at the huge ship on the viewscreen.

RIKER
(slowly rising from his chair)
My God...

WORF
(tense)
Should I raise shields?

PICARD
No.

WORF
Captain--!

PICARD
(firm)
Tactical analysis, Mister Worf.

WORF
(quickly analyzing tactical display)
Fifty-two disruptor banks, twenty-seven photon torpedo bays, sixteen unknown weapon portals, primary and secondary shields.

RIKER
She's not out for a pleasure cruise.

PICARD
(grim)
She's a predator.

WORF
We're being hailed.

PICARD
On screen.

And the image on the viewscreen transforms to:

Shinzon's Viceroy.

He stands on the Scimitar's bridge. The bridge is as unique as the rest of Shinzon's ship. Instead of the usual mechanical clutter, this bridge is designed with an almost Asian simplicity. Like the rest of Reman design, it is elegant.

Since the Remans are more comfortable in the darkness, most of the light comes from the three steadily pulsing warp core relays which dramatically soar up through the floor of the bridge.

The crew gazes at the bridge and the monstrous features of the Viceroy.

VICEROY (on viewscreen)
Enterprise ... We are the Reman Warbird Scimitar.

PICARD
Commander Shinzon, I'm pleased to--

VICEROY (on viewscreen)
I am not Shinzon. I am his Viceroy. We are sending transport coordinates.

And the transmission ends abruptly. The Scimitar reappears on the viewscreen.

RIKER
Not very chatty.

PICARD
Away team. Transporter room four.

Picard, Riker, Deanna, Worf and Data head toward the turbolift, energized now that the endless waiting is over.

INT. SCIMITAR -- OBSERVATION LOUNGE NIGHT

The away team materializes in the most striking location on Shinzon's ship: a large observation lounge.

It is a huge, empty, domed room completely enclosed in sweeping windows that offer a generous view of the space around and above them, including the Enterprise in the distance. A simple Reman mat on the floor is the only decoration. There is no furniture.

It is very dark.

They turn when Shinzon speaks from the shadows:

SHINZON (V.O.)
I hope you'll forgive the darkness ... we're not comfortable in the light.

PICARD
Commander Shinzon?

Shinzon moves toward them a bit, becoming slightly more illuminated, the low light shining off his golden hair.

The crew cannot see him clearly in the dim light but it is evident he is human. Assuming that he was Reman, they are surprised by this realization.

SHINZON
Captain Picard, you can't imagine how long I've been waiting for this moment ... I always imagined you taller ... (to Data) ... You may scan me without subterfuge, Commander Data.

Data scans him with a tricorder as:

PICARD
And you're not as we imagined you.

SHINZON
No?

WORF
You are human.

SHINZON
Commander Worf ... (he speaks in Klingon) ... I greet you as a valiant warrior, as my brother.

WORF
(terse, in Klingon)
I'll save my greetings for a better brother.

Shinzon laughs.

PICARD
Why have you asked for our presence here?

Shinzon does not answer. He is staring deeply at Deanna.

PICARD
Commander...

SHINZON
(quietly)
I've never met a human woman.

He slowly moves toward her, still hidden in the shadows.

DEANNA
I'm only half human.

SHINZON
Deanna Troi of Betazed ... Empathic and telepathic abilities, ship's counsellor. All of this I knew ... But I didn't know you were so beautiful.

RIKER
(cold)
You seem very familiar with our personnel.

Shinzon moves even closer to Deanna, not taking his eyes from her.

SHINZON
I am, Commander Riker ... (to Deanna) ... May I touch your hair?

PICARD
(firm)
Commander Shinzon, we've come to Romulus on a matter we were assured was of great importance. If you have anything to say to us as representatives of the Federation I suggest you do so now.

Shinzon ignores him, continues to stare at Deanna.

SHINZON
(very quietly, to her)
Remans don't have hair.

DEANNA
You're not Reman.

SHINZON
Am I not?

He stares into her eyes deeply. It is strangely seductive. Almost disquieting in its intensity. Deanna handles it with grace, her level gaze never leaving his.

SHINZON
(softly)
On the world I come from there's no light. No sun. Beauty isn't important ... I see now there's a world elsewhere.

PICARD
Commander Shinzon, you requested our presence--

SHINZON
(turning back to Picard)
I ordered your presence, Captain. And you obeyed.

He steps back into the deeper shadows.

SHINZON
I am reopening the question of the Neutral Zone. The Treaty of Algernon that established the Zone was a vindictive document pressed upon my people when we were not strong enough to resist. The Neutral Zone was carved out of sovereign Romulan territory and we will have it back. By diplomacy if possible, by force if necessary.

Picard and the crew are stunned.

PICARD
The Neutral Zone has served as a peaceful buffer between the Federation and the Romulan Empire for over two hundred years.

SHINZON
It is our space, Captain. The days when the Romulan Star Empire cringed before the "mighty" Federation are over ... I look forward to hearing the Council's response ... It's been a unique pleasure meeting you, Jean Luc Picard. You're dismissed.

A beat.

Picard jabs his communicator pin.

PICARD
(terse)
Picard to Enterprise. Five to beam out.

They dematerialize...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- TRANSPORTER ROOM/CORRIDORS FOLLOWING

...The landing party materializes and briskly leaves the transporter room as:

RIKER
"Dismissed"?!

PICARD
Data, get everything we have on the Treaty of Algernon, I want a briefing in half an hour. Will, contact Starfleet Intelligence, find out more about Shinzon. You might mention to them the fact that he's human.

RIKER
Aye, sir.

PICARD
I want to know who the hell he is! Worf, go to security alert status.

WORF
Gladly.

They head off in various directions as:

DEANNA
Captain, there's something wrong.

PICARD
I've gathered as much.

DEANNA
No, it's something about Shinzon. He was resisting me with enormous mental control ... But I sensed great rage in him. It was disturbing.

PICARD
He's planning to go to war with the Federation, Counsellor, I find that sufficiently disturbing.

She stops him.

DEANNA
No, you don't understand, sir ... the rage I felt ... It was focused almost entirely toward you.

He looks at her.

DEANNA
He knows you, Captain.

Picard takes this in.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- READY ROOM NIGHT

Picard is talking to Admiral Janeway on his private viewscreen:

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
We've dispatched the Orion with a diplomatic delegation headed by Ambassador Meelok. They should be arriving within thirty-six hours.

PICARD
(pleased)
I studied under Meelok at the Academy. If anyone can defuse this situation, it'll be him.

JANEWAY (smiles, on viewscreen)
When in doubt, run to the old Andorian ... Until he arrives I want you to keep Shinzon talking.

PICARD
I don't know if that's a good idea, Admiral. He's looking for any provocation and ... he doesn't seem to care much for me.

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
How could anyone not care for you? ... Captain, it's imperative we find out if Shinzon is speaking for the Empire as a whole or just for his Reman "brothers." We have to know what the Praetor thinks of all this. Be your usual, charming self and get me some answers.

PICARD
Understood.

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
The Federation Council is meeting in emergency session right now. But you can be damn sure they're not just going to hand over the Neutral Zone ... Still feeling lucky, Jean Luc?

The transmission ends.

Picard pulls up the text of the Treaty of Algernon on his viewer, begins to study it.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- RIKER AND DEANNA'S CABIN NIGHT

Riker is hard at work over a series of padds. He has been working for hours.

DEANNA
Will, you need to rest... (he continues to work) ... As ship's counsellor, I'm recommending you get some sleep.

Riker tosses a padd on the desk. Rubs his eyes. Looks up at her.

RIKER
Some honeymoon.

She smiles and goes to him.

DEANNA
We have time ... (she kisses him) ... Come to bed.

She pulls him up.

RIKER
Imzadi...

They kiss, deeply. She pulls him across the room and they fall into the bed.

It is passionate, erotic. Her arms undulate around him sensually ... her fingers snake through his hair ... but something is wrong ...

Riker's hair is now blond.

She starts back, her eyes growing wide.

Riker is gone. She is now embracing Shinzon!

SHINZON
Imzadi...

DEANNA
No...

He caresses her face...

SHINZON
He can never know you as I know you ... He can never touch you as I touch you...

DEANNA
This isn't real...

SHINZON
Can you feel my hands ... are they real? Can you feel my lips...

He kisses her neck -- but when he raises his head again...

It is the monstrous Viceroy!

Holding her. Caressing her. She is frozen in horror. But is it the Viceroy at all?

Shinzon's voice seems to come from the Viceroy's lips:

SHINZON (V.O.)
I'm with you, Imzadi ...

And then it is Shinzon again, kissing her:

SHINZON
I'll always be with you now.

DEANNA
NO!

She pushes him away--

RIKER
Deanna?!

It is Riker.

She stares at him, then clings to him desperately.

INT. SCIMITAR -- OBSERVATION LOUNGE DAY

Picard, Riker, Data, Worf and Deanna stand before Shinzon. Deanna watches him closely, disquieted.

Again, the room is very dimly illuminated.

PICARD
... with all due respect, the Federation has the right to inquire whether you're legally empowered to conduct these negotiations.

SHINZON
"Negotiations?" I thought I made it clear to you that the Empire is no longer in the mood for "negotiations."

PICARD
I would like to hear that from the Praetor.

SHINZON
You seem to have trouble understanding your position, Captain. Perhaps it's the darkness ... Perhaps I should add some illumination to our discussion ... (to computer) ... Computer, raise lighting four levels.

At his command lights shoot up around the room.

For the first time the crew can see Shinzon clearly.

Picard actually gasps when he sees Shinzon's face. The rest of the crew doesn't understand his reaction.

Shinzon smiles at Picard.

SHINZON
Allow me to tell you a story that I hope will clarify our "negotiations" ... When I was very young I was stricken with an odd disease. I developed a hyper-sensitivity to sound. The slightest whisper caused me agony...

PICARD
(quietly)
No...

SHINZON
No one knew what to do. Finally I was taken to a doctor who had some experience with Terran illnesses--

PICARD
This isn't possible...

The crew looks at Picard, dumbfounded at his reaction.

SHINZON
And I was finally diagnosed with Shalaft's syndrome. Do you know of it, Captain?

PICARD
(growing angry)
I demand an explanation--!

SHINZON
It's a very rare syndrome. It's genetic. All the male members of my family had it--

PICARD
Stop this!

The crew stares at Picard, stunned at his strange response.

SHINZON
Eventually I was treated. Now I can hear as well as you can, Captain...

He steps toward Picard ... Picard actually takes a step back...

SHINZON
I can see as well as you can ... I can feel everything you feel...

He stops right before Picard.

SHINZON
In fact ... I feel exactly what you feel. Don't I, Jean Luc?

Picard stares at him with a mixture of wordless dread and realization. The crew is utterly confused.

Their confusion turns to outright shock when:

Shinzon calmly pulls out a Reman knife and cuts his arm, drawing a little blood. He hands the knife to Data.

SHINZON
I think you'll be wanting this.

Picard jabs his communicator pin:

PICARD
Picard to Enterprise. Five to beam out.

They dematerialize, the shimmering glow illuminating Shinzon's features as he smiles.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- SICKBAY DAY

Beverly stands with Picard and Riker.

The Reman knife is under a protonmicroscope and other medical readouts and analysis are visible.

BEVERLY
There's no doubt, Captain. Right down to your regressive strain of Shalaft's Syndrome ... He's a clone.

A beat as the confirmation sinks in.

PICARD
When was he ... created?

BEVERLY
About twenty five years ago. All it would have taken was a single hair follicle or skin cell ... (she indicates some medical displays) ... But there's something else ... He was designed with temporal RNA sequencing so that at a certain point his aging process could be accelerated to reach your age more quickly. Apparently the temporal sequencing was never activated ... so he's dying.

PICARD
Dying?

BEVERLY
He simply wasn't designed to live a complete, human life span. When his temporal sequencing wasn't accelerated to match your age his genetic structure started to break down.

PICARD
Can anything be done for him?

BEVERLY
Not without something like a myelodysplastic infusion from the only DNA compatible donor ... But that would kill you.

RIKER
They were going to replace you with a Romulan agent. Put a perfect duplicate inside Starfleet.

Data interrupts on comm:

DATA (V.O. on comm)
Data to Captain Picard, you are needed on the bridge.

PICARD
(taps comm badge)
On my way ... Keep me informed, Doctor.

He goes.

BEVERLY
Will ... How much was Shinzon like the captain?

RIKER
Not remotely.

BEVERLY
You didn't know Jean Luc when he was younger...

RIKER
I know him now.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE DAY

Picard emerges from the turbolift. Data, Worf and Geordi wait at the bridge engineering station.

WORF
Sir, we've had an unauthorized access into the main computer.

PICARD
Source?

GEORDI
It's going to take some time to find out -- the data stream was rerouted through substations all over the ship.

PICARD
What programs were accessed?

GEORDI
That's what I don't get -- it's mostly basic stellar cartography: star charts; some uplinks from colony tracking stations and the Orbital Grid. It's not even restricted material.

PICARD
(to Worf)
Set up a security program to detect any unusual data stream rerouting. If it happens again, we want to be ready.

WORF
Aye, sir.

Picard goes to his Ready Room. Data thinks for a moment.

DATA
Geordi, will you come with me?

He and Geordi head toward the turbolift.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- PICARD'S CABIN NIGHT

Picard is lying in bed. He cannot sleep. He finally tosses off the covers and climbs out of bed.

He goes to his desk, sits. Opens a drawer and removes an old photo album. He flips through it and stops. He stares at one of the pictures deeply.

We finally see the photo: Young Jean Luc Picard. A serious, unsmiling cadet at Starfleet Academy. The face before him bears a disturbing resemblance to Shinzon.

Data interrupts on comm:

DATA (V.O. on comm)
Data to Captain Picard. I am sorry to disturb you, but Geordi and I need to speak with you in Engineering.

PICARD (to comm)
On my way.

He looks at the photo for a final beat.

PICARD
Didn't you ever smile?

INT. ENTERPRISE -- TURBOLIFT DAY

Deanna is alone on the turbolift.

A voice makes her spin:

SHINZON (V.O.)
Imzadi...

Shinzon stands across from her.

DEANNA
You're not here.

SHINZON
(moving to her)
Very logical, Deanna ... But your heart doesn't constrain itself to mere logic ... (he caresses her) ... Your heart longs to discover me. To know me.

He kisses her.

SHINZON
To leave all of this behind and be with me.

He pushes her against the wall, with passion and almost violence.

DEANNA
No...

SHINZON
I can feel your desire, Deanna...

She forces herself to concentrate ... to resist telepathically ... it is a mighty effort...

And the world around her appears to be changing ... bending ...

And she is momentarily in a chamber on the Scimitar. Although entirely a telepathic experience, it is as if she has actually travelled.

She sees Shinzon kneeling over a small flame ... she realizes she is looking through the Viceroy's eyes...

On the Scimitar, Shinzon looks up at the Viceroy/Deanna:

SHINZON
I can feel your hunger to know the Reman ways ... the old ways...

Then the world changes again...

Deanna is on the turbolift. Shinzon is pressed against her, whispering:

SHINZON
Don't fear what you desire...

She forces him away from her and--

She is alone. She sinks to her knees. Overcome with emotion.

INT. SCIMITAR -- VICEROY'S CHAMBER FOLLOWING

The Viceroy, in a kind of trace, kneels before a small flame. Shinzon kneels across from him.

The Viceroy raises his head.

VICEROY
The connection is broken.

A Reman officer interrupts on comm:

REMAN OFFICER (V.O.)
Commander, we've received the transponder signal.

SHINZON (to comm)
On my way.

He and the Viceroy leave.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE DAY

Shinzon is with his Viceroy and some REMAN ENGINEERS.

SHINZON
Transport.

The Engineer activates a transporter and...

The B-9 materializes!

SHINZON
Welcome home ... (to Engineers) ... Begin the download.

Reman engineers go to the B-9 and open the panel in his neck, begin connecting computer conduits to the extra memory port we saw earlier.

[Note: Although the audience will not know it yet, this is actually Data pretending to be the B-9.]

Shinzon goes to a replicator unit and orders:

SHINZON
Tea, hot.

A cup of tea appears. He takes it and sips as he watches his Engineers connecting the conduits to the B-9.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- SICKBAY DAY

Beverly is scanning Deanna. Picard and Riker watch, concerned.

BEVERLY
Aside from slightly elevated adrenalin and serotonin levels, you're completely normal.

PICARD
(gently)
Can you describe it, Deanna?

She looks at Picard, tears in her eyes.

DEANNA
It was ... a violation.

Riker takes her hand.

DEANNA
(with difficulty)
Shinzon's Viceroy seems to have the ability to reach into my thoughts. I've become a liability ... I request to be relieved of my duties.

PICARD
Permission denied.

DEANNA
Captain, I strongly doubt my ability to perform my duties.

PICARD
If you can possibly endure any more of these ... assaults ... I need you at my side. Now more than ever-

But before the words are out of his mouth ... he begins to dematerialize!

RIKER (to comm)
Worf! Raise Shields!

But Picard is gone.

EXT. OVER ROMULUS SPACE

And the Scimitar cloaks. Completely disappearing.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE DAY

Riker strides from the turbolift.

WORF
They've cloaked, sir. No bioreadings from the Captain.

RIKER
Continue scanning ... (taps his comm badge) ... Geordi, get up here.

GEORDI (V.O. on comm)
On my way.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIG NIGHT

Picard stands in the Reman brig. His communicator pin has been removed.

Shinzon enters with the B-9 following. Shinzon stands on the other side of the security force field.

A long beat as Picard and Shinzon study each other.

SHINZON
It's not quite the face you remember.

PICARD
Not quite.

SHINZON
A lifetime of violence will do that. My nose was broken four times. And my jaw ... But the eyes, you recognize the eyes.

PICARD
Yes.

SHINZON
Our eyes reflect our lives, don't they? ... Yours are so untroubled.

Picard glances to the B-9.

SHINZON
Oh yes ... The bait you couldn't refuse. I learned there might be an existing prototype from a Cardassian cybernetics historian. Then I had secret archeology teams search every millimeter of Omicron Theta. Isn't that ironic? You, of all people, undone by archeology?

PICARD
All of this so you could capture me?

SHINZON
Don't be so vain. After we found it, we made a few modifications. An extra memory port, a hidden transponder ... Perhaps your eyes will be more troubled when you learn I've gained access to Earth's Orbital Defense Grid ... (to B-9) ... You may go.

B-9
Where?

SHINZON
Out of my sight.

The B-9 obediently leaves the room as:

SHINZON
Maybe I'll train it to do tricks for me like your little robot does.

PICARD
What's this all about?

SHINZON
It's about destiny, Picard. It's about a human orphan ... a creation ... a freak ... abandoned on a cruel planet. But this outcast met others like himself. Monsters. Slaves. And he learned their ways. And their destiny became his.

PICARD
You're not Reman.

SHINZON
And I'm not human. So what am I? What do you see? ... (he peers at Picard deeply) ... Do you see a life you might have led? ... Lost youth never to be recaptured? -- Yes, that's it, isn't it? You see lost time.

PICARD
I see a young man trying desperately to deny who he is.

SHINZON
I see an old man, set in his ways, his bones creaking under the weight of his life. Afraid to live without a uniform to prop him up and a Starfleet regulation to tell him what to do ... I see the man I will never be.

PICARD
I won't defend my life to you.

SHINZON
Your life is about to end, Picard, so mine can begin. Because what am I while you live? A shadow? An echo?

PICARD
(stern)
If your issues are with me <u>then</u> <u>deal</u> <u>with</u> <u>me</u>. There's no point in dragging the entire quadrant into war over your personal demons. By what right do you hold humanity responsible for your pain?

SHINZON
"Humanity" -- how I've come to hate that word. You couldn't even begin to imagine the pain I suffered because of it ... Human ... Stunted human animal ... If you had lived my life, you'd hate the word as much as I do.

PICARD
Perhaps I would -- but I'd have the perspective to understand that my personal prejudices shouldn't result in intergalactic war.

SHINZON
Again ... so sure of yourself. So completely confidant in your high moral position. But I think the facts speak for themselves ... <u>you</u> <u>are</u> <u>me</u>. The same noble Picard blood runs in our veins. Had you lived my life, you'd be doing <u>exactly</u> as I am ... Look in the mirror, and see yourself.

A beat. Shinzon looks at him deeply.

SHINZON
Consider that, Captain ... I can think of no greater torture for you.

He turns to go.

PICARD
It's a mirror for you as well.

Shinzon turns back to him.

A beat. Picard gazes at him evenly.

Picard's probing gaze makes Shinzon a bit uneasy. He steps back.

SHINZON
Not for long, Captain. I need your blood to live. Regrettably you won't survive the procedure. You won't survive to witness .. the victory of the echo over the voice.

He goes.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE NIGHT

The ship is on Red Alert.

Worf stands at tactical, muscles coiled, hungry for action.

WORF
No response to our hails.

Geordi is hard at work at the Science station. Riker stands over him:

GEORDI
(frustrated)
His cloak is perfect ... no tachyon emissions, no residual antiprotons.

RIKER
Keep at it, Geordi. Find a way in.

Riker moves to the command chair as:

WORF
Sir, we have to do something!

RIKER
All we can do is be ready if the Captain tries to escape.

WORF
If he's even alive...

RIKER
(firm)
Mister Worf--

WORF
(brutal)
I know the Romulans! They butchered my parents at Khitomer. They're animals fit only for extermination!

RIKER
(stern)
Leave your personal feelings aside for the moment and concentrate on helping the Captain, do I make myself clear?

WORF
Yes, sir.

And they wait, the tension getting to them all.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIG NIGHT

Picard stands in his cell, peering at the edges of the security force field, trying to spot any weakness.

Then the B-9 enters the brig, he holds a Reman disruptor weapon.

B-9
(to Reman guard)
I am to take the prisoner to Commander Shinzon.

The Reman Guard deactivates the force field.

B-9
(to Picard)
If you resist, I will incapacitate you.

He leads Picard out...

INT. SCIMITAR -- CORRIDORS FOLLOWING

The B-9 leads Picard through the dark corridors, holding the disruptor on him steadily. All the Remans they pass glare at Picard with undisguised loathing.

The Viceroy approaches. Stops before them.

VICEROY
(to B-9)
Where are you taking him?

B-9
Commander Shinzon wants him on the bridge.

The Viceroy turns his malevolent gaze on Picard.

VICEROY
So, human ... you've met your better self.

PICARD
What are you doing to Counsellor Troi?

VICEROY
I'm preparing her for Shinzon ... To sooth him as she soothes you. To stand at his side as she does at yours.

PICARD
That will never happen.

VICEROY
Listen to him, android. Such a small and weak creature. Yet he roars so valiantly ... (he raises one taloned claw and puts a sharp fingernail on Picard's chest) ... It would take me but an instant to tear that valiant heart from your chest.

PICARD
There'll be another after me. And another after that. You'll find we're a resilient species.

VICEROY
I look forward to the sport ... (to the B-9, harshly) ... Take him.

The B-9 prods Picard's back roughly with the disruptor. Picard grimaces in pain.

B-9
Move.

The Viceroy continues away down the corridor. The B-9 leads Picard along.

PICARD
(whispers)
Be careful of over-playing your part, Commander!

And we realize it is Data -- pretending to be the B-9!

DATA
Sorry, sir. I thought it added a touch of reality to the performance.

They are silent as they pass a few Reman guards. Then:

PICARD
The download?

DATA
He believes he has the access codes to Earth's Orbital Grid.

PICARD
Good work.

Data assumes the B-9's posture again as they pass some more Reman Warriors.

DATA
Move, puny human animal.

They pass the Warriors.

PICARD
A bit less florid, Data.

DATA
Aye, sir.

As they move down the corridor Data secretly rotates his left hand and then slides it forward, exposing a hidden compartment in his wrist. He removes a small, silver disc. This is a cool piece of Federation technology called an ETU (Emergency Transport Unit.)

DATA
Geordi equipped me with an Emergency Transport Unit. I recommend you use it to return to the Enterprise.

PICARD
It'll only work for one of us.

DATA
Yes, sir.

PICARD
We'll find a way off together. Recommendations?

DATA
There is a shuttlebay 948 meters from our current location.

Data inserts the ETU back into his wrist and they continue on.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The Viceroy arrives on the bridge, stops.

VICEROY
Where's Picard?

Shinzon looks at him, confused.

INT. SCIMITAR -- CORRIDORS FOLLOWING

Security alert klaxons suddenly begin to howl and harsh Reman commands are broadcast through the corridors.

DATA
This way, sir!

They sprint down the twisting, dark corridors -- Reman warriors suddenly appear before them! -- Data fires the disruptor as Picard launches himself into them--

A fight -- Picard uses a dazzling series of Starfleet hand-to-hand maneuvers -- he dramatically subdues the Remans.

DATA
Impressive, for an "old fart."

More Reman warriors appear down the corridor -- Picard grabs a disruptor--

And instantly spins to fire -- a blazing disruptor battle breaks out in the corridor -- the energy beams and explosions illuminating the violent fire fight in strobe-like bursts--

During which:

PICARD
Which way?

DATA
(accessing information)
I am calculating an alternate route...

The battle continues. More Remans appear to the other side of them. Picard pivots and fires quickly. The constant barrage of disruptor fire blazes through the corridor.

DATA
Ah. This way, sir.

Data turns and uses his disruptor to blast his way straight through a bulkhead across the corridor from them -- an explosion of debris and sparks--

Picard lays down covering fire for Data:

PICARD
Go!

Data dives across the corridor -- through the hole in the bulkhead -- Picard rolls and fires -- leaping through the hole--

INT. SCIMITAR -- ANOTHER CORRIDOR FOLLOWING

Picard and Data move down the new corridor. They finally arrive at the shuttlebay door -- it does not open.

DATA
(looking at door security panel)
It seems to have an encrypted security system.

Reman warriors are closing in on them--

Data tosses his disruptor to Picard -- Picard catches it and instantly spins and fires -- he uses both disruptors to fire down both ends of the corridor like a Western sheriff -- keeping the Remans at bay--

As Data uses both hands to punch numbers into the shuttlebay door security panel at an amazing rate--

PICARD
Alacrity would be appreciated, Commander.

DATA
They are trying to override the access codes ... Reman is really a most complex language with pictographs representing certain verb roots and--

PICARD
While I find that fascinating, Data, we really need that door open!

The shuttlebay door slides open.

Picard lays down a blistering barrage of cover fire as he and Data duck into the shuttlebay...

INT. SCIMITAR -- SHUTTLEBAY FOLLOWING

When the door closes behind them, Picard turns and fires a disruptor blast -- sealing the door mechanism.

They turn to face...

A fleet of very small shuttles. They are uniquely designed. Extremely compact and stream-lined. A disruptor turret on each.

They move toward one as:

DATA
According to the ship's manifest they are Scorpion class attack fliers.

They quickly climb into one...

INT. SCORPION COCKPIT -- SHUTTLEBAY FOLLOWING

The cockpit of the Scorpion is cramped. Picard climbs into the pilot's position. Data assumes the gunner's position.

They see disruptor fire trying to burn through the door to the shuttlebay -- Picard powers up the Scorpion as:

PICARD
(trying to figure out the controls)
What do you imagine this is?

DATA
Port thrusters, sir. Would you like me to drive?

Picard shoots him a look and presses some controls. The Scorpion lifts off. Hovers a few feet over the deck. Picard elegantly swings it around toward the large shuttlebay external doors as:

PICARD
Can you open the shuttlebay doors?

DATA
(working controls)
Affirmative, sir ... Negative, sir. They have instigated security overrides and erected a force field around the external portals.

PICARD
Well then ... only one way to go.

He swings the Scorpion around again so it is facing the doors they came through, the doors back into the ship.

Data is dubious.

DATA
Do you think this is wise course of action, sir?

PICARD
We're about to find out ... Power up disruptors and fire on my mark.

DATA
Ready, sir.

PICARD
Fire!

And the Scorpion's forward disruptors fire--!

The doors into the ship explode--!

Picard powers forward--!

INT. SCIMITAR -- CORRIDORS FOLLOWING

And the Scorpion shoots into the corridor -- past the stunned Remans -- Picard banks sharply -- careens off the far side of the corridor but keeps control--

The Scorpion zooms down the corridor--

INT. SCORPION COCKPIT -- SCIMITAR FOLLOWING

Picard is concentrating intensely -- it is like trying to control the world's fastest rollercoaster--

Through the viewing port ahead of them we can see Remans in the corridor firing disruptors -- Data returns fire.

INT. SCIMITAR -- CORRIDORS FOLLOWING

The Scorpion banks around a corner -- it zigs and zags through the ship at breakneck speed--

INT. SCIMITAR -- OBSERVATION LOUNGE NIGHT

The doors to the observation lounge EXPLODE in--

The Scorpion SHOOTS into the room and up--

A disruptor blast SHATTERS the clear, domed ceiling--

And the Scorpion ZOOMS triumphantly into space!

EXT. OVER ROMULUS SPACE

The Scorpion seems to appear from nowhere -- slicing through the cloak of invisibility around the Scimitar--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The crew sees the Scorpion appear on the viewscreen.

RIKER
Worf! Lock on transporters!

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Shinzon sees the Scorpion as well.

SHINZON
Tractor beam! Now!

EXT. OVER ROMULUS SPACE

But they are too late -- the Scorpion dematerializes--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- CARGO BAY FOLLOWING

--And materializes in one of the Enterprise's cargo bays.

Picard and Data climb out--

PICARD (to comm)
Number One, go to warp!

RIKER (V.O. on comm)
Captain, the Orion is just arriving.

PICARD (to comm)
Belay that order. I'll be right up.

He and Data head toward the door.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE NIGHT

Shinzon and the Viceroy gaze at the Enterprise on the viewscreen.

VICEROY
My security forces have failed you.

SHINZON
We'll get him back ... (he smiles, actually amused at Picard's escape) ... It was a bold maneuver ... I couldn't have done it better myself.

REMAN OFFICER
Commander, the Orion has assumed standard orbit.

Shinzon glances to his Viceroy.

SHINZON
At last ... Decloak. And contact the Praetor. I want him to see everything.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE NIGHT

Picard speaks to AMBASSADOR MEELOK on the viewscreen.

Meelok is an old Andorian. His small stature, pale blue skin and gently twitching antennae give him an almost elfin appearance. He is, however, one of the best diplomats of the Federation.

Meelok stands in a conference room on the starship Orion, other Federation DIPLOMATS behind him. They wear formal dress uniforms.

PICARD
... Ambassador, while I appreciate your position, I must insist that you raise shields and withdraw from Romulan space. Shinzon has committed an act of overt provocation--

MEELOK (on viewscreen)
Jean Luc Picard, I thought I taught you better than that. His act of provocation is the very opening I need. He has over-reached himself even before my arrival. This gives me an undeniable advantage.

PICARD
Ambassador, with respect, he's not interested in negotiation.

MEELOK (on viewscreen)
We'll soon see ... We're being hailed.

PICARD
Tie in, Commander Worf.

The viewscreen splits to two images: Ambassador Meelok on the Orion and Shinzon on the bridge of the Scimitar.

INT. ROMULUS -- IMPERIAL PALACE FOLLOWING

Praetor Yon'zia watches the same two images. Other Romulan SENATORS and GENERALS are gathered around him.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Shinzon and Meelok are well-matched as they begin the cat-and-mouse dance of high stakes diplomacy. Both even seem to enjoy it.

Picard and the crew watch the exchange on the viewscreen.

The first thing they see is Shinzon standing up from his command chair. He briskly tugs his uniform top down exactly as Picard frequently does, as:

SHINZON (on viewscreen)
Ambassador Meelok, you honor me with your presence.

MEELOK (on viewscreen)
Commander Shinzon, it is our honor to visit the great sister-worlds of Remus and Romulus. We are, however, concerned with recent acts we can only interpret as belligerence ... I trust we are mistaken and you can clarify this unfortunate situation.

SHINZON (on viewscreen)
Nothing would give me greater pleasure, Ambassador. It's so easy for cultural misunderstandings to obscure the truth between peoples.

Picard watches, tense. Shinzon's charming attitude does nothing to calm his fears. He has seen the dark fires within his young double. He knows something is very wrong here.

MEELOK (on viewscreen)
I suggest we begin our conversations on board the Orion. I think you'll find we have replicated a number of succulent Reman dishes you might enjoy.

SHINZON (on viewscreen)
While I have no doubt the food is delicious, the location I find less so.

Meelok's antennae quiver slightly in pleasure.

MEELOK (smiles, on viewscreen)
Come, Commander. We wait with our shields down ... light years from our home ... I think we have sufficiently demonstrated our good will.

SHINZON (smiles, on viewscreen)
I surrender, Ambassador. I've learned when an Andorian's antennae start twitching, you've already lost the battle.

MEELOK (smiles, on viewscreen)
No battle, I hope. Instead I look forward to a constructive exchange of ideas that will prove mutually beneficial.

SHINZON (on viewscreen)
As do I. But if you'll excuse me for a moment, I have some ship's business to attend to ... (he turns to his Viceroy, very calm) ... Activate the pulse.

Picard instantly jumps to his feet:

PICARD
Orion! Raise shields!

EXT. OVER ROMULUS SPACE

Too late...

A beam of energy shoots from a forward portal on the Scimitar -- the energy slams into the Orion and cascades around it -- encasing the ship in a glowing shroud of energy--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Picard and crew stare at the split viewscreen:

Shinzon stands calmly.

Ambassador Meelok is at first shocked. But then nothing happens. There is no explosion. No destruction.

MEELOK (firm, on viewscreen)
Commander Shinzon, I don't understand the meaning of this...!

Then a plant behind the Ambassador begins to shrivel...

MEELOK (continued)
...If you're seeking to provoke a confrontation with--

And then every bit of organic matter on the Orion decays. Flesh melts from bones while the crew is still alive. Every living thing on the Orion is dead within ten seconds--

INT. ROMULUS -- IMPERIAL PALACE FOLLOWING

Praetor Yon'zia watches in horrified disbelief--

EXT. OVER ROMULUS SPACE

The Scimitar slowly turns toward the Enterprise--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

RIKER
Scan for survivors! Battle Stations!

Klaxons ring through the bridge -- a weapons locker spring opens, a row of phasers and phaser rifles -- the crew races to get sidearms and assume battle stations as:

On the viewscreen:

SHINZON (on viewscreen)
Captain Picard -- Praetor Yon'zia -- what you have just witnessed was only a small demonstration of this weapon's power. At full force it can drain an entire planet of life. The time for negotiation is over!

DATA
No lifeform readings on the Orion, sir.

WORF
The Warbird is coming about!

PICARD
Emergency warp!

EXT. OVER ROMULUS SPACE

The Enterprise dramatically powers forward and up -- rolling over in a great arc -- going into warp while still upside down.

It disappears in a blaze of light.

As the dead hulk of the Orion floats in space.

Fade to...

INT. ROMULUS -- IMPERIAL PALACE NIGHT

Praetor Yon'zia stands, leaning forward on his desk, speaking in clipped tones, barely controlling his rage.

Shinzon stands before him, equally angry.

YON'ZIA
... You have just murdered an entire Starfleet crew on a diplomatic mission! Under a flag of truce!

SHINZON
Don't you understand the power of that weapon?! Haven't I proven that this is our time! We now have the power to strike at the very heart of the Federation! Kill that heart and the Federation will die!

Yon'zia looks at him, the terrible reality sinking in.

YON'ZIA
You want to attack Earth.

SHINZON
And when that planet dies ... and the Federation dies with it ... The Romulan Empire will finally fulfill her destiny.

A tense beat.

YON'ZIA
Commander Shinzon ... you will order your Warbird to stand down and you will surrender yourself into the custody of the Empire.

SHINZON
When I return to this place, Praetor, it will be in triumph, not in chains ... After I've completed my mission we'll meet again ... And one of us will have proven himself ready to lead this Empire.

He jabs his communicator emblem.

SHINZON
Transport.

Shinzon dematerializes.

The Praetor presses a communication button on his desk:

YON'ZIA
Destroy them.

EXT. OVER ROMULUS SPACE

Two Romulan Warbirds begin to decloak--

Just as Scimitar cloaks and disappears.

INT. ROMULUS -- IMPERIAL PALACE FOLLOWING

Praetor Yon'zia stands.

ROMULAN GENERAL (V.O. on comm)
They've cloaked, sir.

YON'ZIA
Find them.

He sits at his desk, deeply concerned.

A long beat.

He presses his comm system.

YON'ZIA
Get me Starfleet Command.

EXT. ENTERPRISE SPACE

The Enterprise streaks through space, then drops out of warp.

PICARD (V.O.)
Captain's Log. Stardate 47912.1. We've returned to Federation space and are waiting to rendezvous with the Goya and the Independence ... I've been informed that the Orion held a compliment of five hundred, forty three men and women. They are currently being recorded as ... casualties of war.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- ENGINEERING NIGHT

Picard stands over Geordi. A monitor shows a replay of the beam of energy shooting from the Scimitar and enveloping the Orion.

GEORDI
... It's a Cascading Biogenic Pulse. It attacks any organic material at the molecular level.

PICARD
What defense do we have?

GEORDI
Frankly, sir, even if the Orion's shields had been up, it wouldn't have made a difference. The pulse seems to work in concert with some sort of harmonic resonance beam ... I don't think we can stop it.

Picard stares at the grisly attack as it is replayed on the monitor.

PICARD
Geordi, we need a way to track the Scimitar.

GEORDI
Aye, sir.

Picard goes.

Geordi studies the monitor again, tense. He watches a replay of the beam of energy shooting from the Scimitar.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- DATA'S CABIN NIGHT

Data stands before the B-9.

The B-9 has been deactivated, he stands lifeless and immobile. Data gazes deeply into his double's identical features.

Then he opens a panel in the B-9's neck and uses a small instrument to activate the android's head.

The B-9's eyes spring to life. He looks at Data.

B-9
Brother ... I cannot move.

DATA
No, I have only activated your cognitive and communication subroutines.

B-9
Why?

DATA
Because you are dangerous.

B-9
Why?

DATA
You have been programmed to gather information that can be used against this ship.

B-9
I do not understand.

DATA
I know.

A beat.

DATA
Do you know anything about Shinzon's plans against the Federation?

B-9
No.

DATA
Do you have any knowledge of the tactical abilities of his ship?

B-9
No. Can I move now?

DATA
No.

B-9
Can we go to "Ten Forward" now?

DATA
No. I must deactivate you.

B-9
For how long?

DATA
Indefinitely.

B-9
How long is that?

A beat. Data gazes at the B-9 deeply.

DATA
A long time, brother.

Data reaches forward and deactivates his brother. The B-9's eyes lose the spark of life. He stands, frozen.

Data stands before him.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE NIGHT

Geordi is at the Science station with Picard and Riker, computer schematics illustrate his discovery:

GEORDI
I was thinking too narrowly ... I was trying to defeat his cloak, which can't be done. But then I thought about his weapon -- to create a cascading energy effect that could surround an entire planet, he would need a power source beyond anything we know. So I ran some conjectural energy simulations...

A replay of the Scimitar firing the Cascading Pulse at the Orion plays on the monitor as:

GEORDI
Just before he fired the pulse there was a spike in the tertiary EM radiation band -- there -- It's Thalaron.

PICARD
I thought Thalaron radiation was theoretical.

GEORDI
Which is why our sensors didn't pick it up. But he's got it, Captain.

RIKER
Can we track it?

GEORDI
I've already modified long range sensors.

He works at the console, star charts appear. They study the star charts for a moment. We do not immediately recognize any of the solar systems on the display.

But when Picard looks up at Riker, concern plays across their faces.

PICARD
Set an intercept course. Maximum warp. I'll contact Starfleet.

RIKER
Aye, sir.

PICARD
Good work, Geordi.

Picard strides toward his Ready Room.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- READY ROOM NIGHT

Picard speaks with Admiral Janeway on his viewscreen.

PICARD
... He's heading toward Earth. If he stays on his present course he'll reach you in about five hours.

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
The Goya and the Independence are on their way to rendezvous with you. Transmit whatever you've got on the Thalaron radiation to Orbital Grid Control. If he's coming, I want to be able to see him.

PICARD
Already done.

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
The Goya and the Independence are at least seven hours away ... You may have to handle this alone for a while.

PICARD
Understood.

A beat.

JANEWAY (grim, on viewscreen)
You saw what happened on the Orion, Jean Luc ... He can't be allowed to use that weapon against Earth. All other concerns are secondary ... Do you understand me?

PICARD
I do.

JANEWAY (on viewscreen)
Godspeed, Captain. Janeway out.

The transmission ends.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- VARIOUS NIGHT

We see a montage of the Enterprise preparing for battle.

Crew members assume battle stations. Security Officers hand out sidearms and phaser rifles...

Geordi and his Engineers establish emergency force fields around the warp core...

Riker and Worf brief officers on tactical plans...

Data works at the bridge Science Station, analyzing data on Shinzon's ship...

Picard walks through the corridors, he stops to talk with an apprehensive young ensign...

As we hear:

PICARD (V.O.)
Captain's Personal Log. Supplemental. We are in pursuit of Shinzon's ship. The crew has responded with the dedication I've come to expect of them ... And like a thousand other commanders on a thousand other battlefields throughout history, I wait for the dawn.

The montage ends as...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- CARGO BAY NIGHT

Picard enters one of the Enterprise's huge cargo bays.

Dr. Crusher and her medical staff are hard at work establishing the cargo bay as an emergency triage center. They position anti-grav gurneys and medical supplies. It is a chilling sight, a sea of hospital beds.

BEVERLY
(to staff)
Blue priority beds closest to the transporter pads ... (she sees Picard, goes to him) ... We're setting up additional triage units in cargo bays four and six. Radiation trauma centers in sickbay and cargo bay one.

PICARD
Very good.

BEVERLY
I'll need emergency transporter interfaces with medical diagnostics throughout the ship.

Picard is gazing over the sea of gurneys and beds.

PICARD
Yes.

His eyes do not leave the medical preparations.

PICARD
(quietly)
"To seek out new life and new civilizations..." Zephram Cochrane's own words ... When Charles Darwin set out on the H.M.S. Beagle ... on his journey into the unknown ... he sailed without a single musket.

BEVERLY
(gently)
That was another time.

PICARD
How far we've come ... (he finally looks at her) ... I'll talk to Geordi about the transporter interfaces.

BEVERLY
Thank you.

He starts to go--

BEVERLY
Jean Luc ... (he stops) ... He is not you.

A beat.

PICARD
What makes us who we are, Doctor? Can you tell me that?

She watches him go.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- STELLAR CARTOGRAPHY NIGHT

Data is at work on the platform at the center of the sweeping void of Stellar Cartography. Projections of star systems ebb and flow everywhere around him.

Picard enters, joins Data on the platform.

PICARD
Show me Shinzon's current position.

The images around them quickly morph to show our solar system and a blip representing the Scimitar.

DATA
He has passed Mars Tracking Station Twelve and slowed to full impulse. At our current velocity we will overtake him in 7.3 minutes.

PICARD
Is the Orbital Defense Grid reading him?

The images around them morph to a closer view of Earth. Lights denote the string of defensive satellites around Earth.

DATA
Yes, sir.

Picard gazes at the huge projection of Earth before them for a moment.

PICARD
(quietly)
"For now we see but through a glass darkly..."

DATA
Sir?

PICARD
He said he's a mirror.

DATA
Of you?

PICARD
Yes.

DATA
I do not agree. Although you share the same genetic structure, the events of your life have created a unique individual.

PICARD
But so much is the same. On a biological level he is me ... and I will not accept the idea that there is nothing I can do. I have a responsibility to try to make a human connection with him.

DATA
He would deny a "human" connection is possible. He considers himself entirely Reman.

PICARD
And if I had lived his life? ... Is it possible I would have rejected my humanity?

DATA
No, sir, it is not possible ... The B-9 is physically identical to me, although his neural pathways are not as advanced. But even if they were, he would not be me.

PICARD
How can you be sure?

DATA
I aspire, sir. To be better than I am. The B-9 does not. Nor does Shinzon.

A beat.

PICARD
We'll never know what Shinzon might have been. Had he stood where I did as a child ... and looked up at the stars.

Picard's words linger in the air for a moment. Then:

PICARD
Continue monitoring. I'll be on the bridge--

RIKER (urgent, V.O. on comm)
Captain! We've lost the Scimitar.

PICARD
Explain.

RIKER (V.O. on comm)
We were tracking it fine -- but then the Thalaron radiation just ... vanished.

PICARD
(grim)
He was allowing us to follow him ... Full stop. Defensive pattern Picard Beta. Battle stations.

Suddenly one of the lights representing Earth's Orbital Defense Grid on the projection before them blinks out -- then another and another--

DATA
We are losing contact with the Defense Grid.

PICARD
Re-establish.

By now the whole satellite grid around Earth is failing.

DATA
I cannot, sir. The entire system has been disabled--

Then the ship QUAKES -- a photon torpedo blast -- the Enterprise is under attack!

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Shinzon sits in his command chair. The viewscreen shows the Enterprise before him.

And Earth in the distance.

SHINZON
Target weapons systems and shields. I don't want the Enterprise destroyed.

On the viewscreen, we see disruptor blasts streaking from the Scimitar -- slamming into the Enterprise.

Shinzon glares at the Enterprise on the viewscreen:

SHINZON
Can you learn to see in the dark, Captain?

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Picard and Data emerge from the turbolift as the ship ROCKS--

PICARD
Report.

RIKER
He's firing through his cloak. We can't get a lock.

GEORDI
(at engineering station)
The Orbital Grid is down, sir. He didn't need the access codes -- he used some sort of electromagnetic pulse--

On the viewscreen another disruptor blast appears from nowhere -- slams into the Enterprise -- the ship SHUDDERS--

RIKER
(to Helm)
Evasive maneuvers, Mister Branson.

PICARD
Worf, prepare a full phaser spread, zero elevation. All banks on my mark. Scan for shield impacts and stand by photon torpedoes.

WORF
Aye, sir.

The ship ROCKS again.

PICARD
Fire.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The Enterprise fires all her phasers simultaneously -- the energy beams shoot into space--

And the Scimitar's shape is momentarily illuminated as one of its shields is hit--

Photon torpedoes immediately shoot from the Enterprise -- but pass harmlessly through the area where the Scimitar's shields were momentarily illuminated--

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

SHINZON
You're too slow, old man ... (entering commands in his chair computer console) ... Attack pattern Shinzon Theta.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The invisible Warbird makes a dramatic run straight over the Enterprise -- firing steadily down as it sweeps past -- it is a brutal, close range assault--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The bridge SHAKES violently under the ruthless attack--

DATA
We are losing dorsal shields--

PICARD
Full axis rotation to port! Fire all ventral phasers!

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The Enterprise instantly complies--

Rolling completely over to the left, firing phasers up as Shinzon's invisible ship steaks above it--

A few lucky phaser shots from the bottom of the Enterprise -- now shooting upward -- manage to momentarily illuminate the bottom shields of the Scimitar as it sweeps past above.

Then it is gone.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

WORF
Minimal damage.

Picard thinks for a beat as:

RIKER
(to Helm)
Defensive pattern Kirk Epsilon. Geordi, get those shields online.

PICARD (to comm)
Counsellor Troi, report to the bridge.

DEANNA (V.O. on comm)
Aye, sir.

RIKER
(to Picard)
Unless we can disable his cloak we're just going to be firing in the dark.

PICARD
Agreed.

RIKER
Remind me again why they decided the Enterprise-E shouldn't have saucer separation.

PICARD
(looking at viewscreen)
Why has he stopped firing?

A silent beat.

After the roar of the battle, the quiet is unnerving.

WORF
Sir, we're being hailed.

PICARD
On screen.

Shinzon appears on the viewscreen. He is on the bridge of the Scimitar.

SHINZON (on viewscreen)
Captain Picard, will you join me in your Ready Room?

INT. ENTERPRISE -- READY ROOM NIGHT

Picard stands in his Ready Room. A flickering light shimmers across the room.

And a perfect holographic representation of Shinzon appears before him.

SHINZON
You can't trace the holographic emitters, Captain. So don't bother ... We're quite alone.

PICARD
(evenly)
We are.

SHINZON
More so than you think ... I have just informed Starfleet Command that if my sensors detect a single Federation warship leaving Earth, I will deploy my weapon immediately ... It's just the two of us now, Jean Luc, as it should be ... Your ship and mine ... You and me.

PICARD
Why are you here?

SHINZON
To accept your surrender. I can clearly destroy you at any time. Lower your shields and allow me to transport you to my ship.

PICARD
And what of the Enterprise?

SHINZON
I have little interest in your quaint vessel, Captain. If the Enterprise will withdraw to a distance of one hundred light years, it will not be harmed.

PICARD
You know that's not possible.

SHINZON
I know ... you'll all gladly die to save your homeworld.

PICARD
It's your homeworld as well.

SHINZON
No--

PICARD
(intense)
Look at me, Shinzon! Do you feel the blood pumping inside you? Your hands, your eyes, your nature, are the same as mine. Buried deep inside you -- beneath the years of pain and anger -- is a capacity you've forgotten. It's the one way our mirror can reflect the two of us exactly because it's the very thing that truly defines us ... To be human is to try to make yourself better than you are.

Picard looks at him deeply, relentlessly refusing to give up.

PICARD
I know you as well as I know myself, Shinzon. There was a time you looked at the stars ... and dreamed of what might be.

SHINZON
(quietly)
Long ago.

PICARD
Not so long.

SHINZON
Childish dreams, Captain ... Lost in the dilithium mines of Remus. I'm what you see now.

PICARD
I see more than what you are...

Picard steps toward him.

PICARD
I see what you could be.

Shinzon slowly backs away as Picard continues to move toward him...

SHINZON
I'll be what my life has made me ... A great leader of men.

PICARD
I am a leader of men.

SHINZON
But I fight for the ideals of the Empire.

PICARD
I fight for ideals.

SHINZON
Stop--

PICARD
(relentless)
The man who is Jean Luc Picard and Shinzon of Remus won't exterminate the population of an entire planet! He is better than that!

SHINZON
(desperate)
He is what his life has made him!

Shinzon is in turmoil. Picard senses this. He proceeds quietly:

PICARD
And what will he do with that life?

Shinzon looks at him, questioning.

PICARD
If I were to beam to your ship ... let you complete your medical procedure, give you a full life ... What would you do with the time?

Shinzon doesn't respond.

PICARD
When I was your age, I burned with ambition. I was very proud and my pride often hurt people. I made every mistake a young man can ... But one thing saved me ... I had a father who believed in me. Who took the time to teach me a better way ... You have the same father.

SHINZON
Yes...

PICARD
So if I gave you my life, what would you do with it? Would you spend the years in a blaze of hatred as you are now? Or could you change? Could you try to remember a mother's touch you never felt? A father's gentle words you never heard? Could you do that?

SHINZON
(quietly)
I don't know.

PICARD
But you want to.

Shinzon doesn't respond. But Picard knows he has made a connection. For this brief moment reconciliation is possible. He proceeds quietly:

PICARD
Let me tell you about our father.

Shinzon looks at him with an aching sadness. What might have been.

SHINZON
That's your life ... not mine...

PICARD
Please...

SHINZON
It's too late.

PICARD
It's never too late to change -- that's what being alive is all about!

SHINZON
How can I fight what I am?!

Shinzon backs away, unable to fight his nature:

SHINZON
I'll show you my true nature. Our nature. And as that planet dies -- remember that I'm forever Shinzon of Remus! And my voice will echo through time long after yours has faded to a dim memory.

Shinzon ends the transmission and his holographic image flickers and fades away.

Picard stands alone, drained.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Shinzon strides quickly to his command chair, barking to his Viceroy:

SHINZON
Activate the Thalaron generator!

But before the Viceroy can move -- the Scimitar suddenly ROCKS -- attacked from somewhere! Shinzon is stunned.

SHINZON
Report!

REMAN TACTICAL OFFICER
Two ships decloaking, sir -- Romulan!

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Picard strides to his command chair as two Romulan Warbirds appear on the viewscreen. Deanna is now on the bridge.

RIKER
Believe it or not, I think the cavalry has arrived.

WORF
We're being hailed.

PICARD
On screen.

On the viewscreen: the female Romulan Subcommander DONATRA shimmers into view. She is mature, beautiful and dry.

DONATRA (on viewscreen)
Captain Picard, Subcommander Donatra of the Warbird Valdore. Might we be of assistance?

PICARD
Your timing is impeccable, Subcommander.

DONATRA (on viewscreen)
The Praetor regrets this unauthorized excursion into Federation space, but hopes the circumstances will mitigate our transgression.

PICARD
When this is over, I owe you a drink.

On the viewscreen, the Valdore ROCKS from a disruptor blast.

DONATRA (on viewscreen)
Romulan ale, Captain. Let's get to work. Valdore out.

The transmission ends.

PICARD
(to Worf)
You heard the lady. Get to work.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

And the Enterprise powers forward into battle!

The two Romulan Warbirds join the Enterprise in battling the Scimitar. (Romulan ships must remain decloaked to fire weapons and are visible throughout the battle.)

Although Shinzon's ship is still cloaked, the steady barrage of triangulated phaser and disruptor fire from the Enterprise and the two Romulan vessels illuminate its shields with impacts.

Because of the steady impacts on her shields, the Scimitar is visible for most of this battle.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

PICARD
(to Worf)
Coordinate our attack with the Valdore's tactical officer. Triangulate fire on any shield impacts.

WORF
Aye, sir.

The Enterprise ROCKS from a photon torpedo impact.

DATA
Aft shields are down to forty percent.

RIKER
(to Helm)
Keep our bow to the Scimitar. Auxiliary power to forward shields.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Shinzon sits quite calmly in his command chair.

SHINZON
Target the flanking Warbird, all forward disruptor banks on my mark.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

It is a chaos of starships as the Enterprise and the two Warbirds fire steadily -- illuminating the Scimitar's shields.

The ships sweep around one another, maneuvering for position, firing constantly. The battlefield seems impossibly crowded as the four vessels evade and attack; as phaser and disruptor beams criss-cross space.

Then the Scimitar unleashes a devastating volley -- all her forward disruptor banks fire at once--

They literally cut one of the Romulan ships in half -- a huge EXPLOSION -- debris SHOOTS across space and SLAMS VIOLENTLY off the Enterprise's forward shields--!

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

--the ship ROCKS dangerously!

DATA
Forward shields are down to ten percent.

RIKER
(to Helm)
Bring us about!

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The Enterprise quickly turns about -- firing her aft phasers--

As the Valdore sweeps toward Shinzon's ship, firing--

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

SHINZON
Let her pursue -- drop cloak on the aft port quadrant -- prepare for full emergency stop.

INT. VALDORE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Subcommander Donatra leans forward in her command chair, looking at the viewscreen. She sees part of the Scimitar's rear cloak beginning to fall away--

DONATRA
She's losing her cloak! Stand by all forward disruptor banks!

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

One small part of the stern of Shinzon's ship is now decloaked.

The Valdore zooms toward the Scimitar--

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

REMAN TACTICAL OFFICER
She's almost on us, sir...

SHINZON
Not yet...

On viewscreen he can see the Valdore in pursuit, gaining. The Reman crew is getting nervous.

REMAN TACTICAL OFFICER
Commander...

SHINZON
FULL STOP AND FIRE!

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The Scimitar LURCHES to a stop! -- too fast for the Valdore to respond in time -- it flies over the Scimitar--

And the Scimitar fires!

A devastating volley of photon torpedoes rip into the underbelly and aft of the Valdore as it streaks past--

The Valdore careens out of control and then slows to a stop. It floats dead in space.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

SHINZON
Restore the aft cloak and bring us about.

He leans back in his command chair, ready for the final battle.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

A bloody Subcommander Donatra is talking to Picard on viewscreen. Her bridge is in ruins.

DONATRA (on viewscreen)
I'm afraid that drink will have to wait, Captain.

PICARD
Do you have life support?

DONATRA (on viewscreen)
For the moment. But we're dead in the water.

PICARD
Understood--

Then the ship ROCKS--

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The invisible Scimitar sweeps past for a particularly brutal assault -- disruptor blasts streak along the Enterprise's hull -- a huge, ripping series of explosions tear away several decks of the Enterprise--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

DATA
We have lost structural integrity on decks twelve through seventeen, sections four through ten.

GEORDI
Emergency force fields are holding.

RIKER
Evacuate those decks and reroute field power to forward shields.

Deanna goes to Picard:

DEANNA
Captain -- I might have a way to find them.

PICARD
Counsellor?

DEANNA
The one thing he may have forgotten in the course of battle: me.

PICARD
Make it so.

She quickly goes to Worf at tactical.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE NIGHT

Shinzon is entering tactical commands in his chair console.

SHINZON
Prepare a lateral run -- all starboard disruptors.

Then the Viceroy sudden stiffens, alarm in his eyes--

VICEROY
No...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Deanna concentrates furiously, eyes closed. She stands with Worf, her hand slowly moving his over the photon torpedo targeting display.

It is a wrenching experience as she probes with her thoughts.

DEANNA
He's resisting me...

She is in pain--

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The Viceroy concentrates, trying to block her probing thoughts--

SHINZON
What is it?!

VICEROY
She is here.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Deanna continues to move Worf's hand over the targeting display. She is sweating, panting for breath, concentrating fiercely--

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The Viceroy resists her -- their psyches lock in battle--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Deanna moves Worf's hand over the targeting display--

Then her eyes snap open--

DEANNA
NOW!

Worf instantly fires a full volley of photon torpedoes--

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

A full spread of photon torpedoes shoot through space--

And connect! A series of devastating impacts -- and the Scimitar's cloak fails!

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The Scimitar is now visible on the viewscreen!

Picard stands quickly.

PICARD
Fire at will!

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

And the Enterprise attacks!

It fires all weapons simultaneously -- phasers and photon torpedoes slam into the Scimitar!

Shinzon's ship responds quickly -- maneuvering for position and returning fire.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The bridge has been damaged, sparks sputter through the darkness and debris litters the deck.

Shinzon eyes reflect a growing sense of desperation.

REMAN ENGINEER
Sir, the Thalaron generator is off-line.

SHINZON
GET IT WORKING!

The Scimitar QUAKES from a photon torpedo impact.

SHINZON
(spinning to his Viceroy)
Prepare a boarding party -- BRING ME PICARD!

The Viceroy strides out as Shinzon turns to his tactical officer:

SHINZON
Target shield coordinates beta-three. All disruptors. Fire!

On the viewscreen, we see disruptor beams focusing on a tiny part of the Enterprise's lower shields, slamming into them.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE NIGHT

DATA
Captain, we have lost ventral shielding on deck twenty nine.

PICARD
Divert power and compensate--

An alarm klaxon suddenly rings through the bridge.

WORF
Intruder alert!

RIKER
Let's go.

Riker and Worf quickly head toward the turbolift as:

WORF (to comm)
Security detail to deck twenty nine.

Data immediately assumes Worf's position at tactical as:

PICARD
(to helm)
Take us in.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The Enterprise makes a sweeping run at the Scimitar, firing phasers steadily -- the Scimitar returns fire--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- LOWER DECKS NIGHT

Riker and Worf stride with a SECURITY DETAIL through the cramped lower decks:

WORF
The Romulans ... fought with honor.

Riker realizes what a profound statement this is from Worf.

RIKER
They did, Mister Worf.

A sudden disruptor blast stops them cold! The Viceroy and his invasion force of a dozen Reman Warriors are down the corridor!

The Enterprise crew returns fire. It is a blazing phaser battle, Worf leading his men with Klingon courage. They steadily advance in the face of the blistering disruptor fire--

Riker sees the Viceroy escape into a Jefferies tube--

RIKER
Worf!

Worf instantly dives into the corridor -- landing hard and sliding forward on his stomach -- all the while firing a steady burst from his phaser rifle--

Riker uses the cover to dive after the Viceroy, following him into the dark Jefferies tube, intent on destroying the man who has been tormenting his wife--

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

A Reman Engineer monitors the targeting sequence for the Cascading Pulse. We see a display showing the weapon locking on Earth.

REMAN ENGINEER
The targeting sequence has been activated, sir.

REMAN TACTICAL OFFICER
Their starboard shields are down to twenty percent.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The Scimitar sweeps forward and up -- unleashing a ceaseless volley of photon torpedoes at the Enterprise's weakened upper shields with deadly accuracy--

A huge EXPLOSION as the Enterprise's starboard nacelle is DESTROYED -- the entire ship lurches, spinning in space--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

On the viewscreen, the stars rotate wildly as the ship spins--

PICARD
Attitude control, Geordi--

Geordi works furiously at his console--

GEORDI
We've lost the starboard nacelle--

PICARD
What kind of power can you give me?

Geordi gets the ship under control as:

GEORDI
Impulse only and not a lot of that.

PICARD
Everything you can ... Data, he'll make a direct run at the forward shields. We'll have a clean shot at his Thalaron generator. Stand by all weapons.

DATA
Aye, sir ... How do you know he will make a direct run?

PICARD
Because that's what I would do.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- JEFFERIES TUBE FOLLOWING

Riker pursues the Viceroy through a serpentine network of Jefferies tubes.

The flickering half-light and red emergency strobes of the crippled ship make this an ominous sequence. The Viceroy is in his element -- used to the perpetual night of the Reman Homeworld, he can see in the dark.

Eerie shots from the Viceroy's POV ... almost as if through a night vision scope we see the twisting tunnels ... Riker in steady pursuit, weaving in and out of the tight Jefferies tubes...

Riker peers through the darkness, hunting for the Viceroy.

Then the Viceroy appears from nowhere, firing his disruptor -- the blast sears Riker's arm -- he returns fire -- the phaser and disruptor blasts ricochet dangerously in the cramped network of Jefferies tubes--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The Enterprise ROCKS from a torpedo impact.

GEORDI
Captain, he's almost powered. We have less than three minutes before he can activate the pulse--

Before Picard can respond the Scimitar sweeps into view on the viewscreen -- very close -- filling the screen -- and launches a ferocious volley of photon torpedoes--

A huge EXPLOSION as the viewscreen and some of the forward bridge are BLOWN APART -- the Helm Officer is SUCKED INTO SPACE before a flickering emergency force field springs into position--

Deanna races to assume the helm--

Picard can now see his enemy directly through the gaping hole in the ship's hull--

He sees the Scimitar banking for another attack run--

PICARD
Data, all weapons. On my mark.

The Scimitar zooms toward the Enterprise.

Picard watches it approach.

Closer, closer...

PICARD
Fire!

Through the gaping hole in the hull we see the Scimitar sweeping past -- phasers and photon torpedoes streak from the Enterprise -- the Scimitar fires disruptors--

But the Enterprise is simply out-gunned. The bridge ROCKS as the ship takes a number of devastating hits--

GEORDI
The generator is still on line.

DATA
We have exhausted our compliment of photon torpedoes. Phaser banks are down to six percent.

PICARD
What if we target all phasers in a concentrated attack on the generator?

DATA
The Scimitar's shields are still at seventy percent. It would make no difference, sir.

Picard thinks.

DEANNA
They're stopping...

Through the hole in the hull, Picard sees the Scimitar slowly turning. Slowly advancing.

GEORDI
What's he doing?

PICARD
(grim)
He wants to look me in the eye.

INT. CARGO BAY FOLLOWING

Beverly and her medical crew are working feverishly in the triage unit. Scores of wounded.

Suddenly -- phaser and disruptor blasts explode into the cargo bay as--

The Reman invaders spill into the cargo bay -- Worf and his security detail right behind them--

Beverly and her staff instantly pull their phasers and join Worf in the battle--

INT. JEFFERIES TUBES FOLLOWING

Below decks, Riker stalks the Viceroy through a labyrinthine series of access tunnels. It is like a scene from ALIEN.

Riker stops, phaser ready. He peers into the dark tunnel ahead of him. Sees nothing. We tilt up and see...

The Viceroy clinging to the ceiling directly above Riker! Hidden in the darkness. The Viceroy attacks! -- diving down on Riker -- his lethal Reman knife slashing through the darkness--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Picard stands ... watching the Scimitar maneuver into position.

It stops. A few hundred yards from the Enterprise, its great prow almost filling the gaping hole at the front of the bridge.

PICARD
Time?

GEORDI
Thirty seconds...

Picard thinks, his mind racing.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

On the Warbird, the targeting monitor for the Cascading Pulse is locking on Earth. A computerized voice counts down:

COMPUTER (V.O.)
... Twenty seven ... Twenty six ...

SHINZON
I hope you're watching, Picard.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

GEORDI
Eighteen ... seventeen...

Picard is out of options. Save for one. It comes to him in a flash.

He begins entering command codes into his chair console as:

PICARD
(quickly)
Geordi, put all power to the engines -- everything -- take it from life support if you have to -- full impulse -- half-impulse -- maneuvering thrusters -- anything you can give me.

GEORDI
Aye, sir.

PICARD
Deanna, on my mark.

Deanna's empathic abilities tell us she knows what Picard is about to do. Her face reflects the gravity of his decision.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Shinzon leans back, tasting victory.

COMPUTER (V.O.)
Twelve ... eleven ...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

GEORDI
Ready, sir!

Picard leans forward in his chair:

PICARD (on comm)
All hands, brace for impact! -- (to Deanna) -- ENGAGE.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The Enterprise powers forward in a final thrust--!

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Shinzon sees it coming -- bolts up--

SHINZON
HARD TO PORT!

Too late.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

A massive COLLISION as the Enterprise SLAMS into the Scimitar -- as it SMASHES and GRINDS into Shinzon's ship--

The Scimitar REELS--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Everyone goes flying--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- JEFFERIES TUBE FOLLOWING

Riker and the Viceroy, still locked in hand-to-hand combat, slam around the inside of the Jefferies tube violently--

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Everyone goes flying--

A Reman Engineer pulls himself to the Cascading Pulse monitor:

REMAN ENGINEER
The weapon's portal is blocked!

Shinzon spins to him in fury--

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The two great ships are now locked together, two scorpions with their claws meshed, slowly rotating in space.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Picard helps Deanna back to the helm chair. The rest of the bridge crew is recovering from the impact.

Through the gaping hole in the bulkhead they can see that the forward part of the Enterprise's saucer is now enmeshed in Shinzon's ship.

DATA
He has halted the firing sequence.

GEORDI
As long as we're locked together he can't activate the pulse.

DATA
Casualty reports coming in from all decks.

GEORDI
We have hull breaches on decks four through nine. Critical system failures throughout the ship.

PICARD
(to Data)
Is the tractor beam working?

DATA
No, sir.

PICARD
Get it online.

Picard looks at the Scimitar, concerned. He knows what Shinzon is going to do.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

Shinzon stands in the ruins of his bridge. Many of his bridge crew are now dead.

SHINZON
(to Engineer)
Divert all but bridge power to engines. Full reverse!

REMAN ENGINEER
(protesting)
Sir, that will draw life support from the other decks!

SHINZON
You heard me! ... (to tactical officer) ... Prepare to resume the targeting sequence.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- CARGO BAY FOLLOWING

The battle continues in the cargo bay. Worf, Beverly and the Security Detail are getting the upper hand when--

Worf is hit!

A disruptor blast slams into his head, refracting off his skull, scorching him -- his head snaps back -- he falls -- Beverly instantly springs to his defense -- firing her phaser and stunning the Reman.

She crouches over Worf, quickly probing for vital signs with her hands as:

BEVERLY
(calling)
Dr. Salar! A neural stimulator--!

But before the other doctor can move -- they are all suddenly tossed violently through the air as--

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

Every part of the Enterprise ROCKS -- a great lurch as the Scimitar begins to TEAR itself free -- backing away -- a deafening shriek of metal -- both ships are being torn to pieces in the process -- but it is working -- the Scimitar is ripping free, wrenching itself loose--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- JEFFERIES TUBES FOLLOWING

The Jefferies tube SHUDDERS as the Scimitar continues to tear itself free -- Riker and the Viceroy careen through the tube--

The Viceroy recovers quickly and coils for a final attack -- Riker sees that an access plate has been loosened in the collision -- he desperately rips it away -- knowing the power relays behind will provide him with the advantage he needs--

Bright light strobes from the relays and the Viceroy is momentarily blinded -- Riker uses this opportunity to attack! He dives forward -- slamming into the Viceroy -- they both tumble into a long, vertical access tunnel -- they fall!

Riker shoots out a hand and grabs a ladder -- the Viceroy grabs onto Riker, his talons digging into his uniform -- a long drop below them--

Riker forces the Viceroy's head back -- away from him -- a brutal struggle -- finally Riker uses every ounce of strength he has left -- pushes the Viceroy off him--

The Viceroy falls down the long tunnel -- to his death.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

The whole Enterprise bridge QUAKES as the Scimitar continues to pull itself free--

Picard stands, steadying himself on his command chair.

PICARD
Data, I need you.

Data joins Picard as:

PICARD
Computer. Auto-destruct sequence Omega. Zero time delay. Recognize voice pattern Jean Luc Picard. Authorization Alpha Three Zero Five--

COMPUTER (V.O.)
Auto-destruct is off-line.

Then the ship gives a final LURCH.

The Scimitar is free.

An eerie moment of silence after the explosive tearing and grinding.

Picard watches through the gaping hole in the hull as the Scimitar backs away and slowly repositions itself toward Earth.

GEORDI
Captain, he's resumed the firing sequence.

Picard stares at the Scimitar. His face is set, resolute. He knows what he must do.

Picard grabs a phaser rifle from a weapons locker as--

PICARD
Prepare for a sight-to-sight transport. As close to their bridge as you can get me.

GEORDI
(concerned)
Captain, I don't know if the transporter--

PICARD
That's an order, Commander.

DATA
Sir, allow me to go. You are needed here.

PICARD
Negative.

DATA
Sir--

Deanna takes Data's arm. Looks at him. She knows this is something Picard must do himself.

DEANNA
Let him go.

Picard powers up the phaser rifle as:

PICARD
(to Data)
You have the bridge, Commander ... (to Geordi) ... Now, Mister La Forge.

GEORDI
Aye, sir.

Geordi nervously works some controls on his console and...

Picard dematerializes.

Then the transporter panel explodes in a shower of sparks.

GEORDI
That's it. Transporters are down.

Data thinks for a moment. Then:

DATA
Counsellor Troi, please assume command. Geordi, if you will come with me.

He heads toward the turbolift, Geordi following.

INT. SCIMITAR -- CORRIDOR NIGHT

Picard materializes in the Scimitar. He instantly crouches and spins, phaser rifle ready.

Several Reman warriors in the corridor spin to him -- they fire -- he returns fire, a series of lightning fast pulses from his phaser rifle.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- FORWARD CORRIDOR NIGHT

Data and Geordi stand in a long corridor -- the far end of the corridor opens to space. An emergency force field is in place at the end of the corridor.

Geordi operates a tricorder and another force field flickers on around him.

DATA
As soon as I have gone, use all available power to move away from the Scimitar.

GEORDI
Understood.

Data turns toward the end of the corridor, readying himself.

DATA
What is our approximate distance?

GEORDI
(scans with tricorder)
400 meters.

DATA
Thank you.

Data backs up a little more.

A beat. He looks at Geordi again. Deeply.

DATA
Thank you, Geordi ... Deactivate the field.

Geordi operates his tricorder and the force field at the end of the corridor snaps off--

The void of space fills the corridor and Data takes a running start -- he races down the long corridor and leaps--

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

--into space.

He floats toward the Scimitar, his momentum carrying him. Carrying him too far!

He is going to miss the Scimitar -- almost past it now! -- he thrusts out a hand and just manages to grab onto a dangling piece of wreckage.

He pulls himself up the wreckage to the hull. He rips open an access panel with his superior strength and climbs inside.

INT. SCIMITAR -- BRIDGE NIGHT

Shinzon stands, his eyes glued to the blue planet before him on the viewscreen.

The Cascading Pulse weapon is locked on Earth.

Most of the light on the shattered bridge now comes from the three steadily pulsing warp core relays which soar up through the floor.

COMPUTER (V.O.)
... Forty seven ... Forty six ...

SHINZON
(quietly)
Brothers ... remember this moment ... As we step into the sun.

Suddenly -- a MASSIVE BLAST as the doors to the bridge explode in -- Shinzon spins to see--

Picard, framed in the doorway, phaser rifle ready.

Picard instantly fires for the Cascading Pulse control -- but Shinzon dives to cover it -- the phaser blast hits Shinzon in the chest -- he recoils, slamming to the deck, stunned.

The few remaining Remans on the bridge spin to Picard, firing disruptors -- Picard dives for cover and battles them with his phaser rifle--

He succeeds in stunning the Remans but a final disruptor blast knocks Picard to the deck -- the phaser rifle spins away--

COMPUTER (V.O.)
Twenty nine ... Twenty eight...

Shinzon pulls himself up and races to snatch up a disruptor from a fallen comrade--

As Picard leaps up, grabbing a piece of wreckage, a long metal rod -- Picard thrusts it forward like a spear--

Impaling Shinzon.

A stunned moment of silence as Shinzon gazes at Picard, almost with a look of disbelief--

And then, amazingly, Shinzon forces himself <u>forward</u> -- pushing Picard back against a wall -- Shinzon slowly walks toward Picard, forcing himself down the length of the spear -- the spear point explodes through Shinzon's back -- the weight of Shinzon's body is pinning Picard against the wall -- time is running out--

COMPUTER (V.O.)
Eighteen ... Seventeen ...

Shinzon forces himself down the spear:

SHINZON
I'm glad we're together now -- our destiny is complete.

He finally thrusts himself down the whole spear and clasps his dying hands firmly around Picard's throat--

COMPUTER (V.O.)
Eleven ... Ten ...

Data sprints to the bridge--

He instantly tears open his wrist and pulls out the small, silver disc we saw earlier -- the Emergency Transport Unit -- he slaps it on Picard's shoulder--

A final look between them--

COMPUTER (V.O.)
Seven ... six ...

Data activates the ETU--

Picard dematerializes.

Data looks at the space where Picard was and says simply:

DATA
Goodbye.

Then he spins and pulls out his phaser--

And fires point-blank into the Scimitar's warp core relays -- the bridge explodes -- Data is incinerated--

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

The Scimitar BLASTS APART in a massive flash--

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

--Picard re-materializes.

He sees the brilliant flash from the explosion through the gaping hole in the front of the bridge.

Deanna sits at helm, her face a mask of pain. Geordi stands on the upper rear deck, head down.

A long beat as Picard just stands on his ruined bridge, the thousand yard stare of a combat veteran in his eyes.

Riker emerges from the turbolift. Goes to Picard.

RIKER
Sir...?

Picard doesn't answer, he just stares forward.

Deanna goes to Riker.

DEANNA
Data...

Riker looks toward the glowing debris field in the distance. He puts his arm around Deanna.

Silence.

GEORDI
Sir, we're being hailed.

PICARD
On screen ... (he remembers there is no longer a viewscreen) ... Open a channel.

DONATRA (V.O.)
This is Subcommander Donatra of the Valdore. We're dispatching shuttles with medical personnel and supplies.

PICARD
Thank you, Subcommander.

The transmission ends.

PICARD
(flat)
Geordi ... prepare the shuttlebay for arrivals. They don't know our procedures so just ... open the doors.

GEORDI
I'll take care of it, sir.

PICARD
Number One ... (a beat) ... You have the bridge.

He turns and heads toward his Ready Room.

The others watch him go with great sadness.

When the Ready Room doors close behind Picard, Deanna finally allows herself to cry. Riker holds her closely.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- CARGO BAY LATER

Starfleet and Romulan medical teams work side by side, attending to the scores of wounded.

Worf is being treated ... by a Romulan doctor.

Worf eyes him suspiciously. Beverly goes to them.

ROMULAN DOCTOR
He was very lucky. His cranial structure refracted most of the blast.

BEVERLY
You hear that, Worf? ... Saved by your thick head.

ROMULAN DOCTOR
I'll leave him to you.

He starts off--

WORF
Doctor--

The Romulan doctor stops, turns.

WORF
Thank you.

The Romulan doctor nods and continues on.

Meanwhile, Picard and Subcommander Donatra tour the cargo bay.

DONATRA
We'll take the Reman injured with us. We have better facilities for them on our ship.

PICARD
And what happens to them after that? The dilithium mines?

DONATRA
Commander Shinzon may have accomplished something after all. The Senate is meeting to consider the question of Romulan/Reman unification ... I suppose it was inevitable.

PICARD
I wonder if it was.

They stop.

DONATRA
Captain ... Ours is a very old race. So much older than yours. We are capable of great compassion. And shame.

A long beat as they gaze over the sea of injured. The terrible cost of the battle sinking in.

DONATRA
It was a cruel victory.

PICARD
It was.

Slow fade to...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- TEN FORWARD NIGHT

Hours later. The senior crew is solemnly gathered in the shattered remains of Ten Forward. Picard, Riker, Deanna, Beverly, Worf, Geordi.

They wear their dress uniforms.

Picard goes to each of them. He carries a small, metal box. They each take something from the box.

At first we don't quite see what they are doing. Then we realize they are affixing black bars to the collars of their uniforms.

Mourning bands.

Picard pours six glasses of his precious whiskey. Each takes a glass.

Picard raises his glass.

PICARD
To absent friends ... To family.

They toast Data.

Slow fade to...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- PICARD'S CABIN NIGHT

Picard sits at his desk, speaking quietly to someone we do not see.

PICARD
...I don't know if all this has made sense to you, but I wanted you to know what kind of man he was. In his quest to be more like us, he helped show us what it means to be human.

We see it is the now re-activated B-9 sitting across from him.

B-9
My brother was not human.

PICARD
No, he wasn't ... But his wonder and his curiosity about every facet of human life helped us see the best parts of ourselves. He embraced change ... because he always wanted to be more than he was.

B-9
I do not understand.

PICARD
Well, I hope someday you will.

Worf interrupts on comm:

WORF (V.O. on comm)
Captain, the Hemingway has arrived.

PICARD
On my way. Please notify Commander Riker ... (he stands, prepares to go) ... We'll talk later?

The B-9 does not respond. He is looking rather blankly at a padd on Picard's desk.

Picard begins to leave when ... a sound stops him ... humming...

He turns back to the B-9.

The B-9 is still looking blankly at the padd ... but he is humming lightly to himself ... then he begins to sing, very softly...

B-9
"Blue skies, smiling at me,
Nothing but blue skies do I see."

Then the B-9 is silent.

Picard watches him for a moment, great emotion playing over his features, and then goes.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- CORRIDOR NIGHT

Picard and Riker head toward a turbolift, making their way past the debris littering the corridor.

PICARD
... I'm sorry you won't be here for the re-fit, but I know the Titan needs you immediately.

Riker does not respond.

Picard stops, looks at Riker deeply.

PICARD
The Titan's a fine ship, Will. And she's getting a captain worthy of her.

RIKER
She's the most beautiful ship I've ever seen...

Riker touches a wall of the corridor.

RIKER
But she's not the Enterprise.

PICARD
I promise you in time, she'll become your home ... If I could offer you one piece of advice?

RIKER
Anything.

PICARD
When your first officer insists that you can't go on away missions ... Ignore him.

RIKER
(smiles)
I intend to.

A moment.

RIKER
(with difficulty)
Serving with you has been an honor.

PICARD
The honor was mine ... Captain Riker.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE NIGHT

Picard and Riker emerge from the turbolift. Riker heads to his chair. Deanna is waiting for Picard.

DEANNA
(quietly)
Are you all right, sir?

PICARD
A friend once told me that life is the process of adjusting to change ... I believe I might have found someone who's going to remind me how important that is.

DEANNA
(warmly)
I'm glad.

Picard continues on to his command chair. The salvage vessel Hemingway can be seen through the hole in the hull.

PICARD
Open a channel, Mister Worf ... Federation salvage vessel Hemingway, this is Captain Jean Luc Picard.

CAPTAIN HAGAN (V.O.)
Captain Hagan here. If you'll power down and release attitude control we'll tow you in. I promise a gentle ride.

PICARD
Thank you, Captain ... (he thinks for a beat) ... Would you stand by for a moment?

He indicates for Worf to mute the channel.

PICARD
Geordi, do we have any engine power left?

GEORDI
We might have one-quarter impulse if we bypass the artificial gravity and secondary relay conduits to--

PICARD
Make it so ... (he nods to Worf, channel open) ... Thank you for your offer, Captain Hagan, but the Enterprise will make her own way.

HAGAN (V.O.)
I'm glad to hear it, Captain. Hemingway out.

The crew naturally move to their positions around Picard.

Riker on his right. Deanna on his left. Beverly beyond Deanna. Worf and Geordi behind him.

A long beat as Picard looks at each of them in turn. In these positions for perhaps the last time.

GEORDI
Ready when you are, sir.

Picard looks forward ... toward the sun just cresting over Earth ... toward the clear horizon.

PICARD
Take us home.

EXT. OVER EARTH SPACE

And the proud Enterprise, bloody but unbowed, makes her own way home.

Fade to...

EXT. ENTERPRISE -- SPACEDOCK -- OVER EARTH

A few weeks later. The Enterprise is enclosed in the great womb of a spacedock. The ship is being rebuilt.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

A fresh-faced young officer, COMMANDER MARTIN MADDEN, paces nervously outside Picard's Ready Room. Bracing himself before entering.

Behind him we can see engineers and technicians working everywhere around the bridge, trying to rebuild it. Worf is talking to a young officer at tactical and Geordi is working at the engineering station. We also see new command chairs being installed.

The gaping hole at the front of the bridge has not yet been repaired.

A young woman, the new OPS OFFICER, smiles at Madden's nervousness. He sees her.

MADDEN
So ... what's the old man like?

OPS OFFICER
Why don't you go in and find out?

Commander Madden prepares himself.

INT. ENTERPRISE -- READY ROOM FOLLOWING

Picard is talking to Beverly on viewscreen. She is in her new office at Starfleet Medical.

BEVERLY (on viewscreen)
... You can't imagine them, Jean Luc. They're kids! All with advance degrees in xenobiology and out to conquer every disease in the quadrant.

PICARD
(smiles)
Reminds me of a young doctor I used to know...

BEVERLY (on viewscreen)
They're running me ragged. Nothing but questions day and night ... I love it! Come to dinner and I'll tell you all about it. There's a Bajoran band at the officer's mess.

PICARD
Not tonight, I have work here.

BEVERLY (on viewscreen)
Soon then ... I'll save the last dance for you.

She ends the transmission just as--

Commander Madden enters quickly -- he did not use the door chime so Picard is surprised.

MADDEN
Commander Martin Madden reporting for duty, sir.

Picard stands, they shake hands as:

PICARD
Welcome aboard, Commander. I hope your transfer didn't come as too much of a surprise.

MADDEN
I was ... honored, sir.

PICARD
I needed you immediately to help oversee the re-fit ... (gathering up some padds from his desk) ... Your service record on the Talos is exemplary, but there are a few things I would like to discuss with you regarding my requirements for a First Officer. Shall we say dinner in my quarters at 1900 hours?

MADDEN
Very good, sir.

Picard heads toward the door, carrying a few padds. Madden accompanying.

Picard stops before the door.

PICARD
Commander, I don't know how they did it on the Talos, but we have door chimes on the Enterprise. We use them.

MADDEN
Yes, sir. Sorry, sir.

Picard goes to the bridge, Madden following...

INT. ENTERPRISE -- BRIDGE FOLLOWING

...They emerge to the bridge as:

Worf is arguing with the cocky young ENSIGN busy installing Picard's new high-tech command chair.

WORF
... I'm telling you he won't like it.

Picard goes to them:

PICARD
What's this?

WORF
(grumbles)
Your new chair, sir.

ENSIGN
It's the Mark Seven, Captain. State-of-the-art ergonomics ... command interfaces with--

WORF
I told him you're comfortable with your old chair.

PICARD
Let's give it a try.

He settles into his new command chair. Looks around for a beat at his new bridge crew. Fresh-faced kids. A new generation to teach and nurture. He smiles.

PICARD
Feels good.

Worf and Geordi exchange a look, surprised.

ENSIGN
(points)
Try that button, sir.

Picard presses a button on the chair and -- zip -- metal restraints fly into position around his waist and shoulders. Seatbelts! Picard is surprised.

A beat.

Then Picard smiles.

PICARD
It's about time.

He presses the button again and the restraints zip back into the body of the chair. He is delighted. He turns to Madden:

PICARD
Commander, please sit down ... (Madden sits in the First Officer's chair, Picard shares a padd with him) ... We've received our first assignment. We're going to be exploring the Denab system. It should be exciting. It's a place ... where no one has gone before.

And we cut to--

EXT. ENTERPRISE -- SPACEDOCK -- OVER EARTH FOLLOWING

Through the hole in the hull we see Picard talking to Madden. Picard at work, at peace. Where he is meant to be.

We slowly pull back...

Away from Picard and the Enterprise.

As we hear the B-9's soft tones.

Gentle. Hopeful.

B-9 (V.O.)
"Never saw the sun shining so bright,
Never saw things going so right.
Noticing the days hurrying by,
When you're in love, my how they fly.
Blue days, all of them gone,
Nothing but blue skies from now on."

We revolve away from the Enterprise and Earth ... toward the stars.

Then ZOOM forward into the cosmos as the rousing "Next Generation" theme explodes over END CREDITS.

The End.